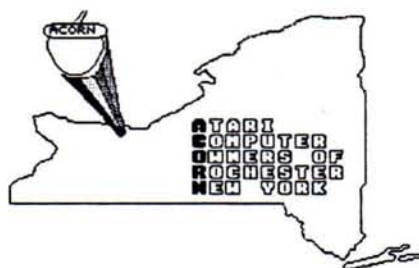


THE ACORN KERNEL

Volume #6, Issue #11

November 1987

\$2.00



Atari Computer Owners of Rochester, New York
(A.C.O.R.N.)

P. O. Box 23676
Rochester N.Y. 14692-0676

NOVEMBER - 1987

MEETING:

Wednesday **NOVEMBER 18, 1987**

TIME:

7:30 p.m. General meeting

LOCATION:

Brighton High School
Room 314N

SIG ACTIVITIES:

Basically Speaking 7:00 - 7:30 p.m.
Room 314N

ST Programming SIG 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.
Room 262S

EXECUTIVE MEETING:

November 11, 1987, 7:30 p.m.
at Kathy Scoville's house,
28 Mertensia Lane., Henrietta

DEADLINE FOR KERNEL :

November 15, 1987

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

The Prez Sez	Page 1
Letters to the Editor	Page 2
Sailing Across the Three C's	Page 2
Software Review:	
10th Frame	Page 3
Message From The Editor...	Page 4
News Release: Prospero Software	Page 4
Basically Speaking	Page 4
8-Bit Library	Page 5
2 Bits x 8 Bits = 32 Bits	Page 6
Aerco Easiest Memory Upgrade	
The Second Chapter	Page 7
Software Review: Bureaucracy	Page 7
A Dangerous Triangle Life	
Experiences	Page 8
520 FM Versus The 520	Page 8
What's Happening in England	Page 9
Software Review: Base Two	Page 10
Selecting A Programming	
Language Made Easy	Page 11
Lock & Key For The ST	Page 11
Treasurer's Report	Page 12
Membership Renewal Notice	Page 12
Interview With Keith Ledbetter	Page 12
Neochrome Animation	Page 16
Software Review: Pirates	
of Barbary Coast	Page 16
Mr Z Interviewed	Page 17
Floppy Disk Resurrection for	
5 1/4 disks	Page 18
You Think Atari Has Troubles???	Page 19
8-Bit SIG	Page 20
Acorn Budget	Page 21
ST SIG	Page 22

Newsletter Exchange Editors Please Note!

The ACORN Kernal's New Address is:

P.O. Box 23676
Rochester, New York 14692-0676

Please check your mailing list!

THE ACORN KERNEL

Atari Computer Owners of Rochester N.Y.

PERMISSION to REPRINT articles from the ACORN KERNEL is granted to school publications, personal computing club newsletters, and nonprofit organizations provided the Atari Computer Owners of Rochester, New York (ACORN) receives a copy of the publication where such a reprint appears. Credit the ACORN KERNEL, newsletter of the Atari Computer Owners of Rochester, N.Y. (ACORN), and give the author full credit if his/her name appears on the original article. Copyright material cannot be reproduced without permission. ACORN assumes no liability for program accuracy or for information published in the KERNEL, and ACORN is not responsible for loss or damage arising from use of software or information published in its newsletter or elsewhere. Opinions expressed in the KERNEL are those of the individual authors, not necessarily those of ACORN, its officers, or the KERNEL staff. A.C.O.R.N. is no way affiliated with ATARI CORPORATION or any other corporation. ATARI is a trade mark of ATARI CORPORATION.

OFFICERS

President	Kathy Scoville	334-5820
Executive Vice-President	David Cox	328-5211
8-Bit SIG Vice-President	Chris Reich	254-2906
ST SIG Vice-President	Tom Bellucco	458-8368
Secretary	Paula Beetle	
Treasurer	Reid Hoadley	442-6135

ACORN KERNEL STAFF

ACORN Editor	Candi Nelson	334-5513
Assistant Editor	Bruce Nelson	334-5513
Advertising/Publicity	David Cox	328-5211
Production and Mailing	Reid Hoadley	442-6135
	Allen Schroeder	227-3152

LIBRARIANS

8-Bit Disk	Nick Cup	266-1468
ST Disk	Roger Safford	297-6371
Newsletter Archives	Allen Schroeder	227-3152

ADVERTISING INFORMATION

The ACORN KERNEL welcomes advertising. Rates per insertion are:

	MONTHLY RATES	YEARLY RATES
FULL PAGE	\$30 OR	12 ISSUES - \$300
HALF PAGE	\$15 OR	12 ISSUES - \$150
QUARTER PAGE	\$10 OR	12 ISSUES - \$100
BUSINESS CARD SIZE	\$5 OR	12 ISSUES - \$50

Queries should be directed to David Cox at 328-5211 or send copy and line art ready for paste-up directly to the ACORN KERNEL, P. O. BOX 23676, ROCHESTER N.Y. 14692-0676 to arrive no later than the 15th of each month prior to publication. All advertising must be prepaid. We reserve the right to refuse any advertising not in keeping with ACORN's policies.

Non-commercial ads are accepted without charge from members and are limited to a maximum of four lines of text.

Articles on disk can be mailed to the Editor, 120 Cobblestone Dr. Rochester, NY 14623.

THE PREZ SEZ

by Kathy Scoville

Happy Thanksgiving! Seem's strange to be wishing you that already. I've just gotten back from celebrating Thanksgiving with my family. (My folks leave for Florida soon and wanted all their children together one last time.) I'll celebrate it again with my hubby's family at the traditional time. What has this got to do with ACORN?...nothing, except to point out that we are heading into the busiest time of the year, and ACORN will be no exception.

PLEASE DO NOT FORGET! The meeting this month will be on the 18th, because the schools will be closed for Veteran's Day. The Executive Committee meeting will be the 11th. Members of the Midi Committee will meet just before the Exec.Com. meeting on the 11th at 7 PM at my home. Anyone not able to make the Exec. Com. meeting, please phone me. Anyone not able to make the Midi Com. meeting, please phone David Cox. Another date you don't want to forget is December 5th. Mark it on your calendars because that is the date of **Robert Collister's Magical Midi Music Concert** at Brighton HS at 8 PM. Doors will be opened at 7 PM. It's a first come first seated affair. When the auditorium is full, we will have to close the doors, so you might want to come a little early to ensure seats for yourselves and your families. Stu Woodard was telling the committee about a few of the ideas for the show that were discarded. They were so good that I can't imagine what the ideas must be like that they are using. And he's not talking.

Hopefully, the annual budget is appearing elsewhere in this newsletter. Please look it over carefully. If you have any questions, we'll try to answer them at the meeting, then we'll vote on it. Speaking of the budget... it turns out that it will be Reid Hoadley's last official act as Treasurer. He tells me that he has been offered a job in Glens Falls again and he's taking it. Just when I was breathing a sigh of relief that he was staying. Anyhow, it means that we will have to hold elections for Treasurer at the coming meeting. Scott Reeder is the only nominee so far. If anyone is interested, please let me or Reid know as soon as possible. Since Reid probably won't be here for the General Meeting, Scott will have to act for him in his absence until the election. We wish you the very best of luck in your new job and home, Reid. Don't forget us and drop us a line once in a while.

It's that time again! Time to renew your ACORN membership. Aren't we worth it? Where else would you meet people like Joe Wrobel, or Dave Vogel, or Robert Collister, or Stu Woodard, or Jeff Summers, or Bob Dolan, or Karl Weigers, or... well, you get the picture. We have a great newsletter that is constantly improving, we have libraries full of PD software for your computers, we have the free "Disk of the Month," we have the news, we have the answers, we have the demos, we have the Beer Sig! ...all for only \$18/year! Remember that the 3rd Annual Disk Swap is coming up in January and it is a member-only activity. So, get your money in (preferably in check form). You can use the Disk Order form in the back of the newsletter. A section has been added to it for membership application or renewal.

There should be two advertisements for the **Robert Collister Magical Midi Music Concert** Dec. 5th. We would like each one of you to take these and place them in your local high school or grade school or library branch or grocery store, bulletin board at work, etc. We are hoping to max out the auditorium and you can help. Tell all your friends. This is going to be a HAPPENING!

PRESS RELEASE: OVERVIEW OF COMDEX 1987 ATARI BOOTH

First uploaded to GENIE 10/2/87

CONNECTIVITY, SOLUTIONS, AND TECHNOLOGY: ATARI ANNOUNCES NEW PRODUCTS AT COMDEX

(Las Vegas, NV -- Comdex Fall 87) - In a series of major product introductions, Atari Corporation emerges as a maker of a complete line of high-performance, low-cost solutions for the business world.

New technology is showcased by Abaq, an ultra-high-performance workstation with blazing speed and dazzling graphics. The Abaq, based on a sophisticated "transputer" chip, runs more than 10 times faster than a PC/AT technology and more than 5 times faster than the 68020 with math processor. The parallel processing capability of Abaq lets a single system multiply its processing power by adding extra transputer chips.

Atari unveiled its new CD player capable of reading CD-ROM disks and of playing musical CD disks. The CD-ROM is supported by a Mega and ST-compatible DMA interface, and will retail in early 1988 for under \$600. Atari's connectivity answer is a LAN which is compatible with the NETBIOS standard used by IBM and Novell. It communicates data at 1 megabits-per-second to PC's and over 250K bits-per-second over Appletalk. Atari is planning to manufacture "PromiseLAN" adapters for the Mega, ST, and PC computer lines.

The Atari Mega computers are showcased with a variety of solid business solutions. Desktop publishing is represented by both the Atari SLM804 Laser Printer and by G.O. Graphics, who are porting their Deskset program (CompuGraphics compatible) which Atari will market. Word Perfect is displaying the recently shipped Word Perfect ST and Atari is displaying Microsoft Write. A group of vendors are appealing to VARs with vertical packages running under the IDRIS multi-user multi-tasking operating system. Several new high-end CAD packages are on display including Foresight's Drafix 1.

Atari expanded its PC-compatible offerings by adding two new models, the PC2 (PC XT compatible) and PC4 (PC AT compatible), both with EGA graphics, high clock speeds, and low price tags. A variation of the PC3 will operate in VGA graphics mode as well. The PC2 and PC4 will be offered with 3.5" or 5.25" floppy disks and with hard disks. These new models join the PC1, which at \$799 is a basic 512K PC XT compatible, suitable for use as a LAN workstation and for standalone personal computing. The PC2 includes XT-compatible slots, while the PC4's slots are PC AT compatible.

"We offer complete systems for the office," said Atari president Sam Tramiel. "I can see Atari Mega computers with laser printers as desktop publishing stations exchanging data with a satellite group of PC1's as LAN stations. An entire office environment can be created. The PC, the Macintosh, and the Atari computers co-exist. Each can do the things they do best."

HELP US ADVERTISE THE CONCERT!

Please place the advertisement on the other side of this sheet in your school, local supermarket, bulletin board at work, etc. The more we advertise, the more people will be aware of this excellent musical event.

ROBERT COLLISTER'S

MAGICAL MIDI MUSIC

CONCERT

**Brighton High School
Auditorium**

December 5, 1987

8:00 P.M.

•PROUDLY PRESENTED BY•
A.C.O.R.N.

Atari Computer Owners of Rochester New York

In Association With
WHISPERING CHIMES MUSIC

DONATION \$1.00

Through the 'Magic' of MIDI* electronics, Robert creates a new dimension in sound. Come with your friends and share this exciting musical experience.

Musical Instrument Digital Interface (MIDI)* is a way for synthesizers, keyboards, sequencers, rhythm machines and computers to electronically communicate with each other.

ROBERT COLLISTER'S

MAGICAL MIDI MUSIC

CONCERT

**Brighton High School
Auditorium**

December 5, 1987

8:00 P.M.

•PROUDLY PRESENTED BY•

A.C.O.R.N.

Atari Computer Owners of Rochester New York

In Association With

WHISPERING CHIMES MUSIC

DONATION \$1.00

Through the 'Magic' of MIDI* electronics, Robert creates a new dimension in sound. Come with your friends and share this exciting musical experience.

Musical Instrument Digital Interface (MIDI)* is a way for synthesizers, keyboards, sequencers, rhythm machines and computers to electronically communicate with each other.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

ACCOLADE

The following messages were taken from the ACORN base on the Atari Apex BBS; Tom Bellucco, Sysop

Msg# : 517 Lines: 8 Read: 41
Sent : Oct 14, 1987 at 3:41 PM
To : ALL
From : SYSOP
Subj : Newsletter

Again, another fantastic job done with this month's KERNEL! Congrats Candi & Bruce on a fine job. I hope everyone out there doesn't take this for granted. We have one of the nicest looking newsletters around, and in fact, I suggest that we call it the official MAGAZINE of the Atari Computer Owners of Rochester, NY. The only thing that ours doesn't havethat (other) mags have is binding! Great job, editors!

Msg# : 519 Lines: 10 Read: 39
Sent : Oct 15, 1987 at 9:54 PM
Recv : Oct 16, 1987
To : SYSOP
From : CANDI NELSON
Subj : Re: <517> Newsletter

Thank you for the congrats, Tom. I hope everyone else likes the Kernel. Bruce and I are not the only ones who put in time to make the Kernel better. Kathy Scoville spends many hours retyping articles from other newsletters. Reid Hoadley gets the Kernel printed and Allan Schroeder gets the Kernel mailed out. And Tom prints out the Kernel on his laserprinter.

Thanks to everyone involved in getting the Kernel out into the hands of ACORN members. I would like to see more local articles written by ACORN members. Please try to write an article about your favorite program, interesting experience, etc. and F-mail it to me on Apex.

~Candi Nelson, ACORN Editor

SECOND ANNUAL GREETING CARD PROJECT

By Maurice Landesberg

As of now 2 nursing homes are requesting our services to help their residents create their own unique computer generated greeting cards. Two dates have been set up for the project, Saturday Nov. 7 and Saturday Nov. 24. Here is your chance to befriend a shut-in, have some fun, and show computer-illiterates what a computer is and some of what it can do.

What we need from you is a computer, printer, and software that can generate greeting cards, and about 2 to 3 hours of your time on one of those Saturdays.

Please contact me on APEX via E Mail, or at home. Phone # is 442-0145. If we can get this cooking early enough we should be able to get some publicity for the group.

SAILING ACROSS THREE C'S

A review by Jeffrey A. Summers, ACORN

There are five versions of the language C available for the 8-bit Atari computers of which I am aware. These are *Deep Blue C*, available from the ANTIC catalog, *ACE C*, available from the club library, *Lightspeed C*, available by mail order, *C/65*, probably no longer available but originally from OSS and still reportedly listed in their catalog, and *NoName C* (also called CC8) which should be in the club library by the time you read this. I have some experience with three of these versions, namely *Deep Blue C*, *ACE C*, and *NoName C*, and they shall be the basis for this review.

First, what is C? C is a language developed and nurtured by Bell Labs that has certain features over other language but limitations as well. The language is structured allowing (or forcing) greater readability of programs and greater maintainability - you can come back to a program a year or more after you wrote it and still see what was going on, unlike many Basic programs. It uses subroutines and functions allowing you to build up a library of commonly used functions for easy incorporation into programs - essentially this makes the language expandable to your needs. It is a compiled language, however, though there is no theoretical reason why an interpreter could not be developed so that a more interactive (Basic-like) interface could be used. Because it is a compiler, it will take longer to develop a program, but the program will run faster once it is complete.

All of these programs are used in essentially the same manner. You write your program using a text editor or word processor (if you use a word processor you must use one that will save the file without control codes, as the compilers will not properly interpret these codes. *Atariwriter Plus* will work, but the best editor I have seen for use with these languages is the *MEDIT* editor supplied with the AMAC or Atari Macroassembler disk). Upon exiting the editor you use DOS to load the compiler, give the compiler the name of the file you created, and the compiler produces an intermediary file. The compiler also checks for errors in syntax. Exiting the compiler to DOS, you then load the Linker program that takes the intermediary file you created, adds the appropriate library files, and creates a runtime file. The linker alerts you if you have asked for a function that isn't defined, among other errors. Exit the linker to DOS and you can load, directly from DOS, like any other binary load file, your program.

Great. Sounds complex and I don't think I'll read further, right? Well, after a couple compiles it gets easy and you hardly think about it. It's especially nice to have a RAMDISK, however, as it speeds the loading of your files.

Now to the specifics of the programs.

Deep Blue C is more or less the father of the other two C's reviewed here. They all refer to DBC in the documentation, and if any C for the 8-bit can be called a "standard", this is it. It is readily available, and the documentation is good. The docs won't teach you C, but they will give you all the information you need to convert the real standard C to DBC format. All the functions available are also well described, giving parameters and examples where needed. The problems with the program are many, however, as the subset of C that is supported is fairly limited. There is no floating point support (numbers

with a decimal point) in the original version, and the current version uses a VERY non-standard method for dealing with these numbers. The compiler is relatively slow, and I found that I could actually develop a program in machine language as fast as using this package, and the ML version would run faster and take up less space. At that point I gave up on DBC.

Along came *ACE C*, a public domain version of C from the club library. *ACE C* was reportedly a faster easier to use, more complete version of C produced by the *ACE user group* in Eugene, Ore. I eagerly took on the task of reviewing this program when offered by Nick Cup, our club librarian, about 4 or 5 months ago. However, once I printed out the documentation, I lost enthusiasm for this long a time. The reason is that the documentation is almost non-existent. References to DBC are made, but if you don't have DBC you are out of luck as far as syntax conventions, etc. The documentation for the functions available is horrible - it's in the function source files in the form of comments. This means that the documentation is automatically more difficult to read and poorly organized. There are a plethora of great functions - player missile graphics support are only a beginning, but the documentation makes development a nightmare until you have used the system for some time. It also uses the unorthodox method of dealing with floating point numbers. The resulting programs, however, are faster, as are the compile times. This is an expanded version of DBC, but the documentation is so poor that it makes the language almost worthless.

Along came *NoName C*, or CC8 as it existed on *GENIE* from which I downloaded the program and documentation. This is only a compiler, and the author states that you must use the linker and library files from one of the other two C's above. What makes this C different enough to get me to finally write the review? For one thing, it is fast. For another, it truly is an expansion of DBC, adding data structures and multi-dimensional arrays. Documentation is good, however remember that since the libraries come from one of the other packages I can't comment on this aspect of the documentation. I use the language with the *ACE C* linker and libraries even though the documentation is dismal, it is a larger, more complete package of routines and creates smaller run-time files. DBC programs will run with only minor modifications, and the addition of data structures gives this C some real power.

So, what should the person interested in C (maybe considering an ST and wanting a head start on the currently most popular language there) do? My suggestion is to get the *NoName C compiler* and *ACE C* for its linker and libraries. Then get a friend to lend you his documentation for DBC for a couple days while you get used to the "standard" syntax. You will also need to print out the listings of the source code for the libraries, look it over and make a list of the functions, parameters, and a few words describing the function that you can reorganize and keep handy whenever you program. Pick up a good book on C (*C Programmer's Guide* is pretty good), and you should be on your way.

SOFTWARE REVIEW: 10TH FRAME

by Chris Freemesser, ACORN

As a computer freak and an accomplished bowler, I was pretty anxious to get a bowling game for the ST. I have played many computer bowling games (starting with *Bowling* for my OLD Atari VCS). I must say that *10th Frame* is far and away the best I have every played. *Access Software* has come up with a nice idea about copy protection. The disk itself is not copy protected, but the game comes with a "security key" that plugs into joystick port 1, and is needed to run the game. I have no problems with this on my 520ST, but someone with a 1040ST will have huge problems plugging it into an unextended joystick port.

Controlling the game takes alot of practice to master. Using the right mouse button, you place the bowler and a target in the desired position. This targets the ball's path. Then with the left button, you regulate the ball's speed and hook. Both are determined by a yellow line that ascends/descends a scale, and you hold down the button until the line reaches the desired position. Each scale has a small "safe zone", which is marked by two white lines. When you stop the line within this zone, the ball will act predictably. When outside of the zone, the degree of unpredictability depends on the level you play. You have the option of kids, amateur, and pro level, up to eight players, and up to five games per player.

When two or more players are present, a full sized score sheet is shown after each frame (a big slow down). If you accidentally press the mouse buttons before this sheet comes down to the bottom, the next bowler will automatically shoot without being aimed. I certainly hope *Access* fixes this glitch. The game also has a demo mode and a terminate game command. Also, there is digitized applause, pinfall, and machine sounds. You can also print out scores (so you can prove you shot a 299). One big thing this game lacks is a left-handed mode. Southpaws (like myself) may have problems with the different perspective on the game. The documentation is somewhat skimpy, but gets the main ideas across.

I enjoy this gamevery much, and I also recommend *10th Frame* highly. If you like bowling, you will love this game. Just be sure not to lose the security key, for replacements are \$10. However, I did not like the delicacy of the controls. It is very easy to shoot a bad ball. By the way, my high game is 224 on August10 in amateur mode. Anybody care to challenge me?

Yes Tom, you can have a rematch....

10th Frame by *Access Software* runs on any ST with a color monitor. Retail price is approximately \$35.

MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR....

By Candi Nelson

I would like to thank the ACORN members for all the positive comments on the new look of the Kernel. It has taken me 5 months to get the Kernel where it is now (with lots of help from my Husband, Bruce, who happens to be the assistant editor.) If anyone has ideas further improvements that can be made, please contact me.

What we do need is MORE articles written by ACORN members. Several ACORN members contribute on a regular basis. These people have had their articles reprinted in other User Group newsletters that we exchange with. If you write an article there is a chance that your name will appear in the "Reprints Hall of Fame".

Reprints Hall of Fame

Jeff Summers - Oct. 87, *New Orleans Atari Users Group* (NOAUG) for article: "A Point of Contention"

Chris Freemesser - Oct. 87, *The I/O Connector* (San Diego Atari Computer Enthusiasts) for article: Review of Sub Battle Simulator

Tom Bellucco - Sept. 87 *ACE of Syracuse* for article: I always wanted a Hard Drive for my Atari ST.

David Cox - Oct. 87 *The Access Sheet* (ACE of Greater Mohawk Valley) for article: Rise and Fall of Atari.

Congratulations to these people for fine articles.

NEWS RELEASE: PROSPERO SOFTWARE

Gem programmer's package from Prospero offers outstanding value

Prospero Software launches two new GEM Development Environments at the Personal Computer World Show, 23 - 27 September 1987. Called Prospero Pascal for GEM and Prospero Fortran for GEM, the products are aimed at Pascal and Fortran programmers. They will run on any IBM PC or compatible, including the Amstrad PC1640. The package includes:

- Pro Pascal or Pro Fortran-77 compiler
- GEM based four-window editor
- Integrated programmer's workbench
- Linker
- Librarian
- Run-time Library
- Complete GEM bindings for Pascal or Fortran
- Symbolic Debugger
- Cross referencer
- 250 pages of language documentation
- 250 pages of GEM VDI documentation
- 250 pages of GEM AES documentation

Prospero Pascal for GEM costs \$149.00 and *Prospero Fortran for GEM* costs \$199.00 exclusive of VAT.

With these products Pascal and Fortran programmers can enjoy the advantages offered by GEM and reserved until now for those programming in C. Pascal and Fortran programmers can now write programs using windows, icons, mice and pull-down menus. GEM also gives hardware independence - so that programs can be changed, without requiring program modifications.

Come and see *Prospero Pascal for GEM* and *Prospero Fortran for GEM* demonstrated on Stand 4000, Olympia 2, level 1 at PCW.

Prospero Software, based in London, was set up in 1981 by Tony Hetherington and Mike Oakes to develop quality compilers for microcomputer professionals. It has produced a wide range of validated Pascal and Fortran compilers for 8-bit z80, 16-bit 8086 and 32-bit 68000 architectures.

For more information please contact:

Prospero Software, Inc.
100 Commercial Street
Suite 306
Portland, ME 04101
Telephone: 207-874-0382
1-800-327-6730

BASICALLY SPEAKING

By Jeff Summers, ACORN

Last month I showed how you may change graphics modes in the middle of the screen by modifying the display list, and this month I will continue in a discussion of Basic and display lists by showing how you may modify the display list to break up the display into parts. To briefly review, the display list is a series of instructions that are interpreted by the ANTIC chip that tell the computer how to display its data. In essence, it is a second "program", much like the machine language programs that are interpreted by your central brain chip, the 6502 CPU in the computer. However, this program uses a different instruction set (covered last month) and is quite available to BASIC. If this is confusing, look at last month's column.

We changed graphics modes in the middle of the display last month by changing a number in the middle of the display list. Now, let's look at another way we can change the display list and its applications to our programs. As you recall, adding 64 to a mode instruction (a display list instruction that tells ANTIC to display a line in a particular graphics mode) makes it a "load memory scan" instruction. This tells the machine that you are changing where in memory you have the screen. The screen is normally in "high memory", the highest available memory addresses before running into the BASIC ROM memory. However, the screen can actually be anywhere in the normal memory that you choose, as long as you tell ANTIC that you moved it. The load memory scan (LMS) instruction does just that.

There is one kicker, however, and that is that the ANTIC chip is not smart enough to read memory over a 4k boundary. If you decide that your screen will start close to a 4k boundary, you must execute another LMS instruction to get the machine to read the rest of the screen over the boundary. That sounds too much like work, so the best way

is to keep the screen away from these boundaries - not very hard as you'll soon see.

Two more points and then we'll get to an example that will hopefully make things clearer. The first is that the screen memory does not follow the usual character codes - you can't poke the screen memory with ASCII codes and have the corresponding characters displayed on the screen. The reasons are known best to the OS designers, but they chose to implement a second character set for display purposes. Information you want displayed needs to be translated to this alternate character set. Listings of the character set can be found from a number of sources, most notably *MAPPING THE ATARI* by Ian Chadwick, a must for any serious programming. The second point is that changing the display list tells ANTIC where the screen is, but the operating system is still in the dark. You need to tell the OS where the screen is if you plan to manipulate the screen using any standard statements. This includes INPUT, PRINT, POSITION, etc. The OS must be informed as to where it may find the screen for these to work. How do you tell the OS? Simple. Poke the address of the start of the segment of screen memory you are currently accessing into locations 88 and 89 (low and high halves of the address in the usual form respectively).

Now for an example. This program will display a message in the top half of the screen while independently using the bottom half for input that scrolls out at the middle, much like DOS does when asking for certain parameters.

```
10 REM UPPER AND LOWER SCREENS DEMO
20 REM BY JEFFREY A. SUMMERS MD
30 DIM SCR1$(480), SCR2$(480), NAME$(20),
  ADDR(2)
40 A=INT(ADR(SCR1$)/4096)
50 B=INT((ADR(SCR1$)+480)/4096)
60 WHERE=1:IF A<>B THEN WHERE=2
70 ADDR(1)=ADR(SCR1$):ADDR(2)=ADR(SCR2$)
80 FOR I=0 TO 479:POKE ADDR(WHERE)+I,0:
  NEXT I
90 FOR I=1 TO 13:READ A:
  POKE ADDR(WHERE)+210+I,A:NEXT I
100 DATA 52, 47, 48, 0, 47, 38, 0, 51, 35,
  50, 37, 37, 46
110 DLIST=PEEK(560)+256*PEEK(561)
120 POKE 559,0:POKE DLIST+17,66
130 POKE DLIST+18,PEEK(DLIST+4):
  POKE DLIST+19,PEEK(DLIST+5)
140 HIGH=INT(ADDR(WHERE)/256):
  LOW=ADDR(WHERE)-256*HIGH
150 POKE DLIST+4,LOW:POKE DLIST+5,HIGH
160 POKE 559,34
200 OPEN #1,4,0,"K:":PRINT CHR$(125)
210 GET #1,X:PRINT CHR$(X);
220 GOTO 210
```

Line 30 sets up the arrays we will use. We either use SCR1\$, or if that array crosses a 4k boundary we will use SCR2\$. Since the arrays are defined one right after the other they cannot both cross 4k boundaries. Lines 40, 50, and 60 determine if the beginning and end of SCR1\$ are on the same side of a 4k boundary. If so, WHERE is set to 1 which will indicated we are using SCR1\$. If not, WHERE is set to 2 and we use SCR2\$. Line 70 fills the ADDR array with the starts of these two SCR arrays, and we will then use ADDR(WHERE) to determine where we want to poke and display our data from now on. Line 80

fills the SCRn\$ array with 0's, which represent spaces in the screen codes. Line 90 puts a series of numbers in the middle of the array, and these will then be in the middle of the top half of the screen once we are done. These are the screen codes representing our message. Line 110 finds the display list, line 120 turns off ANTIC so we can adjust the display list without problem. The 17th byte in the display list, corresponding to line 12 on the screen is then changed to 66 (64+2, the 2 is for a graphics 0 mode line). Line 130 then puts the original address of the beginning of screen memory into this position on the screen. Line 140 finds the byte values (high and low) for our new screen and line 150 puts these addresses into the display list positions defining the top of screen memory. Line 160 turns ANTIC back on, then lines 200 through 220 allow you to move the cursor around the screen. As you note upon running the program, the cursor will not enter the top half of the screen but will disappear if you do. Actually the cursor moves to the far bottom of the screen after moving above the apparent top and is too low to be displayed on your monitor. Experiment with this for awhile, and you'll see how it can be used to create interesting displays for your own programs, protecting menus, etc.

THE 8-BIT LIBRARY

By Nicholas J. Cup, ACORN

Here we are with another month passing by. This brings us closer we get to the ANNUAL DISK COPY. I wanted to mention it now to give you some time to think about what disks you would like to get.

A brief explanation of what this is all about would go something like this:

At the January meeting we try and get as many 130XE systems (130XE, Drive, Tv) to the meeting.

With them we try and copy as many disks as possible that you want. You would then pay \$1.00 (instead of the normal \$4.00) for each disk (one side).

Basically that's it. I'll have more details in December's column. Also normally we try and make a complete update for this meeting, but since the last update come out so late we may just make another supplement, that is unless we can make some more significant additions. So far we have 12 new disks added to our library.

Last month I requested programs, art, music, *PRINT SHOP* Icons, and anything else YOU have made. And so far I have had one response. **Maurice Landesberg** has offered to bring in his home made Icons to start our first ACORN ICON DISK. Thanks Maurice. So everyone keep them coming.

One last thing about Icons. If you have made the Icon, please keep them separate from others you may be giving me. This way I can be sure to put it on the ACORN ICON DISK, and the others on a miscellaneous Icon disk (which by the way is over half full now). I think you'll enjoy them.

Goodbye Friend

I would like to take this time out to say goodbye to a friend who is leaving us all. **Reid Hoadley** has been our club Treasurer for some time now and has done a

tremendous job. He was always right there manning a booth, donating his equipment and his time. He has given us his thoughts and ideas to make our club strong and ever growing. He has personally helped me as Librarian, and I would like to say Thank You very much for being my Friend! I'm going to miss you!

The 8-Bit Disk of the Month will be U20. See you all next month.

2 BITS X 8 BITS = 32 BITS ?

by Pat Pulvino

First let me introduce myself to the members of ACORN. As a salesperson for *LEON's COMPUTER MART* for the past 7 years, I've sold a few computers in my day. Many of the older members of ACORN may even have purchased their machine from me. I own a 48K Atari 400 (remember them?), two disk drives, three modems, an Atari 1040ST and other machines as well.

I have always been a supporter of the Atari computer and when I attended the ACORN meetings I listened to the members of ACORN complain about *LEON's COMPUTER MART*. Sometimes it's easier to shut up than defend, but now I think it's time to defend or at least explain.

To those of you who remember me, I'm the one who praised the Atari 8-bit over the likes of Apple, Commodore, IBM, and others. Why? Because they were better. But better at what? At sound (4 sound registers compare that to Apple and Commodore), colors (256 versus those other guys' 16 colors -- ha!), graphics (CTIA chips, GTIA chips, antic chips, player missiles), software support, warranty support (*LEON's* was the *FACTORY AUTHORIZED SERVICE CENTER*), speed, ease of use, etc. Put it all together, the (ATARI and *LEON's*) were the best... 6 years ago.

Where are they (ATARI and *LEON's*) today? Let's look.....

1) **WARRANTY:** Atari has no factory authorized service centers, but, with the poor quality of product they released in the past few years, they would have gone broke if they had to pay for parts and labor to fix those machines. When a new machine breaks down under ? **WARRANTY?**, the selling dealer is responsible, not the factory. When Jack Tramiel ran Commodore 1 of every 2 Commodore 64 machines didn't work and Atari laughed. Look who's running Atari ???

2) **HARDWARE:** A retailer can't even buy a Atari disk drive now from Atari. Oh, we can buy them from distributors if we look hard enough. One distributor is even selling units that were returned to them as defective by the *Kiddie Cities*, etc. Sure they don't work, but then there's no warranty on them anyway, so who cares? If we want them bad enough, we'll buy them, fix them and sell them. Sure we will !!!! (The reason for the lack of product is a new drive coming that is double-sided, 360K faster, etc.... we'll talk about that later.)

3) **REPAIRS:** The new Atari won't take purchase requests

for parts over the phone, they must be written and delivery can take 2-6 weeks. Don't call to check on your parts order, they can't help you over the phone.

4) **NEW PRODUCTS:** Atari is great in testing the water. They stuck in their toes so many times with new product announcements that their toes must look like prunes. These announcements, of course, are at the expense of the fools (salespeople) who bother to follow them. For your benefit, most of the computer sales people are on commission and to them, time is money. Atari took the salesperson's time (and, I might add, the customer's time) and rewarded them with things like: Atari 1400 XLs, 1450XLDs, CD Roms, 1200 Baud Modems, 80 column add-ons, Mega STs, PC Emulators, Atari PCs, 260STs, Portables, Amy chips, Blitter chips, Double-sided 5.25 drives, 3.5 drives for the 8-bit, etc.

Need I continue? Talk is cheap to Atari. It sure does sell their stock with talk like this, but not their products. They've forgotten who sells the product.

5) **USER & GROUP SUPPORT:** This is where Atari takes the cake. But not without the aid of owners and users. The backing of software developers who can see their product pirated and distributed before it's even on the shelves for sale. Dealers don't have to stock software for Atari because the distribution network of stolen software is so well developed by mail or, better yet, by BBSs. The mail is so slow, why not (use) the phone? Oh yes, let's not forget the great support given to the Atari Retailer by the heads of user groups who complain that this dealer or that one charges \$20 - \$30 more than **COMPUTER MAIL RIP-OFF**. Let's not support this dealer because their salesman didn't help us with getting **ENLARGED-COMPRESSED ITALIC SUB-SCRIPTED UNDERLINED BOLD** on the Star NX-45 we bought from **COMPUTER MAIL RIP-OFF**. Why hell, it's a good thing we didn't buy it locally, cause as you can see, they won't help us.

6) **SO WHERE DOES THAT LEAD ME:** Speaking for myself (not that I'm alone in these feelings) I think Atari has strung me along enough and to steal a phrase "I'M **MAD AS HELL AND NOT GOING TO TAKE IT ANY MORE!**" I'm tired of selling a machine that probably doesn't work out of the box, or if it does work, won't for that long. I'm tired of selling a machine that can't be taken out of town 'cause who's going to fix it in where ever it goes anyway. I'm tired of talking about this or that product that probably won't be out anyway, and if it does come out, ...won't work. In short, I'm tired of selling Atari. I'm tired of buying Atari. I'm tired of making excuses for Atari. **AFTER THINKING ABOUT IT, AREN'T YOU?** Aren't you tired of hearing excuses from Atari. Aren't you tired of not seeing that new software title for you Atari? Aren't you tired of not seeing that piece of hardware from Atari?

My one hope for Atari is (that) they wake up and see what their policies are doing to, what was once a broad base of support, their dealers. But since they recently bought their own electronics firm to get shelf space, I don't feel there's much hope for them. Let them prove me wrong. So, there's my 2 bits on their 8-bits and 32-bits.

(By the way, for the best and most reasonable Atari repair in the city, maybe the state, check out *Computer Software Services*, (716) 467-9362. You won't be sorry.)

AERCO EASIEST MEMORY UPGRADE THE SECOND CHAPTER

Reviewed by Tom Neitzel, S*P*A*C*E

Courtesy of PSAN, September 1987

I wrote an earlier article in the June, 1987 PSAN regarding the installation of the **AERCO easieST memory** in one of the club's 520 STs. I was impressed with the overall quality of construction on the upgrade, the relative ease of installation, and the support that the factory gave over the telephone. I saw a great deal of potential in the upgrade board since it apparently was designed to allow up to 4 MEG of memory to be present in the 520. I was also told that the documentation would be forthcoming on how to make the upgrade to 4 MEG work.

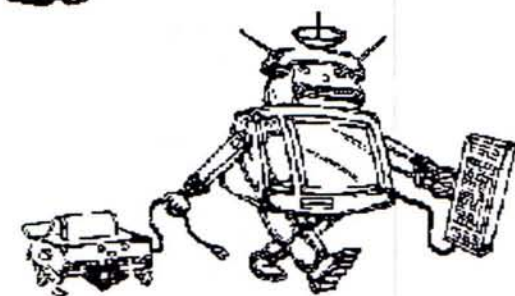
I have received the instructions for the modifications necessary to make the **easieST RAM** upgrade function at 4 MEG (using 32 ea. - 1 MEG chips).

To be absolutely blunt, I am truly disappointed in the instructions. They are relatively clear and appear complete, BUT I would not even THINK of attempting to use the **AERCO** upgrade to run 4 MEG in a 520!

The **AERCO** memory board MMU replacement socket must be greatly modified to allow 4 MEG. These modifications I consider to be far too extensive to expect most computer hobbyists to successfully complete. The changes to the boards include the addition of several jumpers, the cutting of 33 resistors (that's right, 33 of the little devils), drilling a hole and passing a wire through the board, and, most disturbing to me, the removal (breaking off) of 11 pins from the MMU socket. This is a "one-way" upgrade, no pulling out the changes and returning to the beginning.

In all fairness, the first paragraph of the upgrade instructions reads "These instructions assume you've had lots of experience cutting traces and soldering on dense PC boards. If this is not the case, please let your dealer or **AERCO** perform the modifications. We charge \$40 plus return shipping." I would encourage you to pay the \$40 if you must have 4 MEG of memory with the **AERCO** board.

I think that the basic **AERCO easieST** memory upgrade is a good product for the 520 if you want to increase your RAM to 1 MEG (using 256K chips) or 2.5 MEG (using 16-1 MEG chips). These two memory configurations can be handled without alteration of the basic upgrade components. I would not personally push the upgrade to 4 MEG.



BUREAUCRACY FROM INFOCOM

Reviewed by Angela Burns

Courtesy of DAL-ACE, August 1987

RETAIL PRICE: \$39.95 for both 8-bit & ST versions

BUREAUCRACY is the latest text adventure from **INFOCOM**, long the leader in such things, and Doug Adams, author of *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*.

Available for both the 8-bit and ST computers, **BUREAUCRACY** was inspired by Mr. Adams' adventures with a bank change-of-address card (not a pretty story). After a move, his checks and credit cards were mailed to the wrong address, and he found it time-consuming and frustrating to get them to acknowledge and correct the error. Even after everything had been "set right," they sent him a letter of apology - to his OLD address!

The documentation is cute, but it has nothing whatsoever to do with the game (as far as I can tell). It mimics those ludicrous public service booklets about your move and your relationship with Filmore Fiduciary Bank, illustrated like a 1957 elementary pencil. Once you do that, look at the two carbons - the questions on the carbons are different from those you answered on the top copy! Some of them are really hilarious! There is no score displayed in the usual way in **BUREAUCRACY**; instead, your blood pressure reading is shown at the top right corner of the screen. Every time something irritating happens to you, your BP goes up; when things are going well, it returns to normal. You are given your score upon quitting the game.

All this should give you some clue to what it's like to play **BUREAUCRACY**. As usual with **INFOCOM** and with Adams, the game is interspersed with witticisms; but after half an hour or so of play, you're not sure they're so funny any more. This has got to be one of the most frustrating games I have ever seen! You can't get your mail, the bank is closed (when it's open it might just as well be closed), your U.S. Excess card has expired, you don't have any cash; in short, your life is a nightmare. And do you think in a month I have figured out what to do about ANY of this? Not on your life! I have never seen a game where EVERYTHING one can think of to do is so utterly USELESS! I am even beginning to suspect that there is not really any way to win the thing - maybe in a few months, **INFOCOM** will announce that the entire thing was a hoax! (I have a rich fantasy life, don't you think?)

You would think all this frustration would make a person hate this game, but just the opposite is true. I am positively addicted to it, even though I can count on dying of high blood pressure within half an hour of the beginning of each session. **BUREAUCRACY** is a real challenge. I think you'll enjoy it.

Memorable Computer Quotes

compiled by Candi Nelson

"I heard it through the tape drive."

"Don't byte off more than you can queue"

"Is MS DOS a feminist?"

A DANGEROUS TRIANGLE LIFE EXPERIENCES

by Thud Rooter, STARBASE

Courtesy PSAN, September 1987

When last I left you I was happily reviewing 8-bit software and politely ignoring the ST. Life was so much simpler then.

I kept two systems set up in the living room. My XL was tied into my two 810's and my modem. I could sit and let the XL download software off *GENie* and *CompuServe* (and a few local resources) while I played *ULTIMA IV* and *LEATHER GODDESSES OF PHOBOS* on the XE.

And then it happened! I started dating a woman more than casually. As we all know, the two most devastating things that can happen to a computer enthusiast's schedule are romance or a job. And I already had a job!

What to do?

I did the only sane thing in the situation...I let her play on the color monitor while I played on the monochrome. A romance was strengthened and another Atarian had entered the fold. Who could ask for more right? Wrong.

At this point there enters a force so devastating, so overpowering that surely my sweetie and I must be driven apart.

It all started innocently enough. I bought an ST.

I quietly took down the XL, hid the monochrome monitor in the closet and left the color set on the XE. My lady still didn't know the difference, after all she had yet to go to a users group meeting so she didn't realize that she had been 'left behind' with just an 8-bit.

At first she didn't realize that I was being unloyal to her (and my faithful XL, not to mention my 800!). Then she began glancing at the screen after hearing the intro music and synthesized voice singing on *STARGLIDER*, the graphics on the character's shields in *PHANTASIE*, and the cute, little, old man on his quest in *GOLDEN PATH*. Then I heard those fateful words, "Let me play on the ST now."

You've all been there, you have sat patiently waiting for a turn on your own computer. You've listened to someone brag about the battles they have won in *ALTERNATE REALITY* or how tough *SHANGHAI* is after a couple of beers, right?

At first she started coming over more and more often so she could keep her characters as strong as mine in *PHANTASIE*, then we moved in together, so I wouldn't do too much in *UNIVERSE II* that she might miss.

I was becoming a wreck. There were actually nights where I spent less than an hour (or two) on my machine. And then while wiping the dust away from my 8-bit bins it came to me! A way out of this dilemma, a way to regain my position in front of my ST!

It went slow at first. Strange men coming around

and calling me at odd hours. At first I thought I wouldn't pull it off but last Sunday I knew I had accomplished the unthinkable. I had sold enough 8-bit stuff to go out and buy a second ST!

Oh joy! Oh bliss! We sat down together for the first time, and booted up the 1040 and 520FM side by side. I let her have the 1040 with the SC1224, I used the FM with the color TV (yes, I AM one heck of a guy, but love will cause a man to do what a man's gotta do, pilgrim).

So life is pretty wonderful again. I got my gal by my side, my ST in front of me....and just in case, my XE over in the corner.

520FM VERSUS THE 520

By Thud Rooter, STARBASE

Courtesy of PSAN, September 1987

As mentioned elsewhere this issue, I broke down and bought a 520FM specifically because it would run through the TV. I had hoped that *STARBASE* or one of the other groups would do a demonstration of the two machines side by side. If anyone has, I missed it, but I don't mind.

If you have been working on someone else's machine and look for the 520STFM to have the same crisp, bright graphics that you get on the SC1224 monitor you are in for a major disappointment. Graphics are fuzzier and colors not as sharp. Now bear in mind that I am using a 13 inch color from Korea that I bought EXTREMELY reasonably at *Silo*. This is not a TV/monitor. This is just a plain television. And the pictures are not bad at medium resolution. But they don't come near what you get on a monitor. My guess is that if you HAVE a TV/monitor, you may get a pretty good picture.

STWriter in 80 column on the STFM, through a TV, is a little painful. But switch to low rez and you still have 300K of free memory to fill on a screen that looks an awful lot like what you are used to with *AtariWriter* (and I still swear by *AtariWriter*).

The built-in drive is single sided. Atari has to get rid of those hummers some how. The STFM owner has one less plug and component littering the battle ground that most of us try to pass off as a computer table.

I will be honest and admit that I am typing this into my 1040 and looking at the monitor in 80 column. But if I wanted to get into my first ST today and couldn't afford the \$700 or so that a complete system is running, I would go out to one of the local stores and see what they will do either on the 520STFM or the 520 with free standing drive. I got lucky, my little brother switched to IBM and sold me the 1040 cheap. But when I showed him the deal I got on the 520STFM he started mumbling about how little there is in the way of good game software for the IBM when compared with the Atari.



WHAT'S HAPPENING IN ENGLAND

By Darryl May

Reprinted from the September 1987 Issue of the *San Leandro Computer Club Journal*

I was lucky enough to take my vacation in England and I just happened to stop by a computer store that carries ATARI software. Well, finding all those brand new titles put me into an uncontrollable spending spree. I bought everything for my ST that I could find. With each new item my heart would beat faster and faster. I ended up with over 20 titles for my ST and a couple for my trusty 8-bit. I also came back with 20 magazines about ATARI computers. The aftermath is that my credit card bill was seven hundred dollars. But I did get the best exchange rate when I used my VISA card. What I hope to give you in this article is a brief review of the programs and some of the information I found in the magazines and other places.

I bought the following programs for the ST:

Altair, Silicon Dreams, Crafton & Xunk, Q-Ball, Road Runner, Gauntlet, Metrocross, Prohibition, Liberator, Hades, Nebula, Jewels of Darkness, Terrestrial Encounter, Jupiter Probe, typhoon, Macadam Bumber, Turbo GT, Passengers of the Wind, and Barbarian. I also got *Arkanoid, Gauntlet* and *The Pawn* for my 8-bit.

The one strange thing about these programs is that most of them turn my disk drive light on after loading. I found many magazines while in England. The magazines that covered the ST included: *ATARI ST USER, ST World, and the ST Update.* *ATARI USER* only covered the 8-bits. *PAGE 6* covered both ATARI computer series. *YOUR COMPUTER, PERSONAL COMPUTER, COMPUTER + VIDEO GAMES, and GAMERS* are all general computer magazines.

The top computers in England were the *Spectrum*, the *Amstrad, Com-64*, and all the ATARI computers. The *APPLE, MAC* and *IBM* computers don't seem to be known at all in England. The ATARI ST series of computers is soon to be the hottest computer in England. Every computer store that I passed by had ATARI stuff even in the big department stores.

Altair, Crafton & Xunk, Macadam Bumber, and Turbo GT are made by a French company called *ERE Informatique* and put out in England by *INFOGAMES*. *Altair* is just another one of those scrolling shoot 'em ups. *Macadam Bumber* is a pinball game and editor (a clone of *Pinball Construction Set*) with a real French flavor about it. *Turbo GT* is a car racing game along the lines of *Indy 500* (2600 version) and *Sprint* (coin-op), but steering a car with a joystick doesn't work very well. Also in *Turbo GT* the car gets stuck in the wall sometimes (it must be an extra feature.) *Crafton & Xunk* is the best one from *ERE*. *Crafton & Xunk* features excellent 3-D graphics and animated characters. *Crafton & Xunk* is a graphic adventure; the joystick, mouse, or keyboard guides you (Crafton) can walk, jump, and collect items. *Xunk*, your dog, just follows you around while you bump into the pretty nurse or the punker and many other creatures that wander the rooms.

A company called *US Gold* makes home computer versions of many arcade coin-ops. I picked up *Metrocross, Road Runner, and Gauntlet*. *Metrocross* features a side view of an indoor racing track on which you guide your runner to

the finish line by jumping over Coke cans, hurdles, and traps; *Metrocross* is a good arcade quality game. *Gauntlet* is an arcade classic featuring 2 players on the screen at once battling all kinds of strange creatures while you travel through endless dungeons. *Gauntlet* is also available for the 8-bit. *Road Runner* is a game based on the crazy antics of two cartoon characters *Wile E. Coyote* and *Road Runner*. You guide *Road Runner* along the road gathering bird seed and avoiding *Wile E. Coyote*, who is always chasing you. *US Gold* is currently working on *Indiana Jones; The Temple of Doom* and *Solomon's Key for the ST*. *Xevious* is also available, the products are as close to the real arcade coin-ops as anyone could get. As far as I understand, these games will appear in the states either by *Mindscape* or *Epyx* soon.

Rainbird (the people who made "*The Pawn*") had two new adventure games called *Silicon Dreams* and *Jewels of Darkness*. Each of these packages includes 3 text adventure games! I haven't had a chance to play these adventures but both packages are in the top 10 list of software titles for all computers in England. I also got a copy of "*The Pawn*" for my 8-bit but for some reason my copy doesn't work? There was another game called *TRACKER* but I wasn't able to find it.

Typhoon by *Kingsoft* of Germany is a scrolling shoot 'em up. The game includes 2 diskettes of digitized sound and stunning graphics. The games take a real long time to load and I'm not sure the game is worth the wait. *Kingsoft's* F. Schafer can be reached at Schnackebusch 4; D-5106 Roetgen.

Q-Ball is a 3-D pool game. Yes, 3-D Pool, The graphics are good and speedy. Also the game play looks interesting. but I still can't find the pockets. *Q-Ball* is now available in the states from *Mindscape*. *Mindscape* has also picked up *TrailBlazer* and *Plutos* from Europe.

Now the two best games: *MouseTrap* and *Barbarian*. *MouseTrap* is an arcade type of game. In *MouseTrap* you help Marvin the Mouse gather prizes to win his girl by walking, jumping, and climbing around the screen. There must be almost 50 screens to be cleared. I love this game. *Barbarian* is made by *Psygnosis* of Brataccas fame. This time you control He-man as he battles creatures during his travels in this underworld. The control of the He-man is operated by the mouse, joystick, and keyboard in any combination. The game play is great and the graphics could be the best ever done on the ST. [Both] *Liberator* [another game] and *MouseTrap* are made by *MicroValue* but *Liberator* S---S[Ed. expletive deleted]. Remember, *MouseTrap* is the good one. These games are available in the states by *TDC Distributing*. Speaking of bad software, a game called "*Terrestrial Encounter*" [also available from *TDC Distributing*] is a real dog!!! *TDC Distributing* can be reached at (305)423-1987.

Jupiter Probe is soon to be a *Michtron* program of the week. Well, if you've seen *Gold Runner* then you have seen *Jupiter Probe*. I would call it a clone, but it's written by the same guy (Steven Bak). *Prohibition* is an arcade coin-op conversion of *Empire City*. Everything seems to look good but my copy bombs out. *Hades Nebula* is [another] scrolling shoot 'em up [game] again. Good graphics, but the joystick response is slow. Finally, *Passengers of the Wind* is a graphic adventure movie. The graphics are great but the characters are French cartoon characters. And it is assumed that you [are] already

familiar with them. Most of the interaction is done with the mouse.

That's all folks.

BASE TWO

By Steve Golden

Courtesy of Eugene ACE Newsletter, Aug/Sept 1987

DBMaster One is a data base that is simple to learn and simple to use. It was included free with the purchase of the 520ST for a short time and has since been "de-bugged", enhanced somewhat and is now sold by Atari. I have been using **DBMaster One** for over a year and I've been very happy with the ease of use and the power. I've been just as unhappy with **DBMaster One's** faults. Along comes **BASE TWO**. **BASE TWO** is a data base that is simple to learn and simple to use. This sounds like my description of **DBMaster One** and it should. **BASE TWO** is a GEM based data base by the authors of **DBMaster One** and distributed by Antic magazine through *The Catalog*. **BASE TWO** was written to correct the faults and include the "wish list" left out of **DBMaster One**.

As with all data bases, **BASE TWO** will allow you to keep track of information such as record collections, book collections, mailing lists, computer programs (did that catch your interest?), subjects on VCR tapes, etc. The big difference with **BASE TWO** (and **DBMaster One**) is that you can learn to use it in one sitting and if you don't use it for a month, you do not have to re-learn how to use. Like **DBMaster One**, **BASE TWO** consists of two programs, one to design the data base and one to actually use it. Each has the ability to find data based on selection criteria, to display that data, to report on that data and to allow modifying and adding to that data. Each allows redesigning the data base without losing the existing data. **BASE TWO** and **DBMaster One** "feel" and look very much alike but that is where the similarity ends.

Once a data base is created, **DBMaster One** does not allow is use in any other resolution. **BASE TWO** lets you switch between high and medium resolution at any time. It has a menu option to set or correct the system date. It lets you enter printer control codes to initialize the printer to italics, condensed, enlarged or any other type your printer supports.

Rather than continuing to compare **DBMaster One** with **BASE TWO**, I'll just say that anything you liked about **DBMaster One** has been incorporated in **BASE TWO** with one exception that I'll note later. (That "note later" is a common ploy used by writers to increase suspense in an otherwise dry article!) Anyway, **BASE TWO** has allowed the increased use of the keyboard so you don't have to grab the mouse after keying data. For example, to "find" all records, press control F and press return. There is no need to "click" on the "find" box. When updating a record, the cursor moves from field to field when you press return. Each field is "blocked" and can be deleted by pressing the backspace or delete key. The data can also be changed by using the cursor keys and the backspace and delete keys. This is much better than **DBMaster One's** allowing only the backspace and no cursor key use. But this also causes a problem since the entire data field is "blocked" and if you press delete or backspace before moving a cursor key, the data field is deleted. This is not good. Worse, there is no way to recover the data without re-typing it. Since a field

can be several hundred characters long, retyping might not be practical. An automatic move to a buffer that could replace the data using the undo key would have been a great idea. I think that a more work should go into the keyboard operation of **BASE TWO**. Additional options include defining calculation fields that can be the calculated result of other numeric fields and/or constants. These and other numeric fields can be totaled on reports.

The most important changes incorporated in **BASE TWO** are in the reporting functions. **DBMaster One's** weakest link was in its report generation which gave you almost no control over field length and often cut off the end of addresses and the last few digits of my phone numbers. **BASE TWO** gives you user defined, two line headings including optional page numbers, time of day and current date. You can place data fields anywhere on the line of on more than one line. Each field size can be adjusted as desired. Data fields defined as calculation fields and be totaled on the report. You no longer have the problem of fields that contain only numbers being automatically totaled. Another great option is allowing constants to be included in your print line. Something I really appreciate is the option to concatenate data fields. These are called "soft" fields in **BASE TWO**. Concatenating in **BASE TWO** means that the data fields will be placed one after another removing all but one space between them. The first name "John [spaces]" concatenated with the last name "Smith" will appear as "John Smith". Unfortunately, the concatenate option applies to the report rather than just to selected fields. This is excellent for address labels but not for reports with fixed headings since you never know which position a field will be placed on a line. The report designing and modifying is very easy and fast. Designing the report is done by pointing at fields and pointing at the report in much the same method as designing the data base. **BASE TWO** can store ten report definitions per base.

There are some problems with **BASE TWO**. There are some bugs in the reporting functions. I wish I could be more concise about these bugs but they were transitory and I was unable to repeat them. None of the bugs I found caused any data loss but did cause false headings or extra total lines. These cleared up as soon as I tried to repeat them. I occasionally had a problem placing a field in the report if it was to be placed on a line between two lines containing data. I had to move the lower line's data away, place the new data and then move the lower line's data back again. This was annoying but not "fatal". There are also some very important items missing. The search options should include logical operators such as "NOT EQUAL" and an "OR" option. Now there is only an "AND" comparison when you specify more than one field and there isn't any way to find records that "DO NOT CONTAIN" specified criteria. Included is an option to convert **DBMaster One** files to **BASE TWO** but there is no way to import ASCII files. This was the one item that was added to **DBMaster One** by Atari and should be available in **BASE TWO**. Dan Matejka and Stanley Crane wrote **BASE TWO**. Dan,... Stanley,... PLEEEZE! Make an ASCII import option available to purchasers of **BASE TWO**!

There are many other options included in **BASE TWO**. "DIP" file output, "Soft" page sides and bottoms, report sorting, print to disk or screen, help menus, and more. **BASE TWO** is memory based so your file size is limited by the amount of memory in your ST. This does allow very

fast access to your data. *BASE TWO* is fast enough so you can use while on the phone to customers. I usually benchmark software subjectively. I use it and if it's comfortable and I don't feel like I'm waiting, then it passes my acceptable rating. I loaded a 2300 record, 97,000 byte file and that used only 40% of the available memory in a 520ST. The same file in a 1Meg ST used 14% of the available memory. For those of you that need some timing, the longest I had to wait on a search was 10 seconds. More representative times were 1 - 2 seconds. If you don't have a data base, *BASE TWO* is an inexpensive introduction and will probably do everything you'll ever need for home use. If you have *DBMaster One* and you're unhappy with the reporting function, *BASE TWO* is your answer. If you have another data base and you're tired of needing the manual every time you have to use it, try *BASE TWO*. It's easy! It's fast! and it's even fun to design and use!

SELECTING A PROGRAMMING LANGUAGE MADE EASY

Daniel Salomon & David Rosenblueth
Department of Computer Science, University of Waterloo
Waterloo, Ontario, Canada N2L 3G1
Courtesy of DAL-ACE, August 1987

With such a large selection of programming languages, it can be difficult to choose one for a particular project. Reading the manuals to evaluate the languages is a time consuming process. On the other hand, most people already have a fairly good idea of how various automobiles compare. So in order to assist those trying to choose a language, we have prepared a chart that matches programming languages with comparable automobiles.

ASSEMBLER - A formula I race car. Very fast, but difficult to drive and expensive to maintain.

FORTRAN II - A Model T Ford. Once it was king of the road.

FORTRAN IV - A Model A Ford.

FORTRAN 77 - A six-cylinder Ford Fairlane with Standard transmission and no seat belts.

COBOL - A delivery van. It's bulky and ugly, but it does the work.

BASIC - A second-hand Rambler with a rebuilt engine and patched upholstery. Your dad bought it for you to learn to drive. You'll ditch the car as soon as you can afford a new one.

PL/I - A Cadillac convertible with automatic transmission, a two-tone paint job, white-wall tires, chrome exhaust pipes, and fuzzy dice hanging in the windshield.

C - A black Firebird, the all-macho car. Comes with optional seat belts (lint) and optional fuzz buster (escape to assembler).

ALGOL 60 - An Austin Mini. Boy, that's a small car!

PASCAL - A Volkswagen Rabbit with a trailer hitch.

ALGOL 68 - An Astin Martin. An impressive car, but not just anyone can drive it.

LISP - An electric car. It's simple but slow. Seat belts are not available.

PROLOG/LUCID - Prototype concept-cars.

MAPLE/MACSYMA - All-terrain vehicles.

FORTH - A go-cart.

LOGO - A kiddie's replica of a Rolls Royce. Comes with a real engine and a working horn.

APL - A double-decker bus. It takes rows and columns of passengers to (the) same place at the same time. But, it drives only in reverse gear, and is instrumented in Greek.

ADA - An army-green Mercedes-Benz staff car. Power steering, power brakes and automatic transmission are all standard. No other colors or options are available. If it's good enough for the generals, it's good enough for you. Manufacturing delays due to difficulties reading the design specifications are starting to clear up.

LOCK AND KEY FOR THE ST

By R-FLASHMAN [The Flash]

Courtesy of NYBBLES & BYTES, September 1987

I was walking by *Radio Shack* today, and in I went. Under the alarm section, I saw they sell a round key lock like the ones used on an IBM AT. Since it is for an alarm, it has the contacts on one side, all ready for an electrical wire. Hmmm, I thought. I am always getting annoyed by people who play with my ST at a show or meeting when I am busy doing something else...

I bought it...

And I found space right over my joystick ports (520) on top of the RF shielding, and now I have a AT style lock and key on my ST! Looks very good, was dead cheap, and in the OFF position, you cannot turn on the ST!

Actually, (it is) so simple it is disgusting. (Lock cost \$9.99) I haven't tried a 1040 yet, so (I'm) not sure about location. I found two locations on the 520: On top of the unit, to the back and left. Right over the cartridge port. Turn your 520 upside down and you will see how much space there is. I am hoping that the 1040 has the same space. The other, which is the one I used, is right above the second joystick port. (The one you DON'T plug the mouse into). There is enough space, and it lies right above the RF shielding, it is also NEXT to the power switch, so not much cable is needed.

The switch has two connectors on its end. I connected two wires to it, and the(n) (o)pened the RF shielding up. You will notice that the power switch has three "legs" coming out of it. The one you want to get is the smallest one. (This is the one closest to the back of the ST). I cut it right where it meets the main board. (Now, THAT took guts!) Then I soldered one of my wires to it. I then connected the other wire to one of the wires that come up from the BOARD to that funny round magnet that is to

the left of the power switch (and about an inch into the board). The wire that it gets wired to is the one closest to the mouse port. If you don't believe me, look UNDER the board and you will see that originally that wire was connected to the leg that we just cut off the power switch. You NOW have a switch to the power switch. Turn the key to OFF and the power switch becomes useless.

FOR SALE

Disk Drive, 810 with Archiver and Happy \$195.00
Atariwriter Plus, Quik Pix and Parrot Digital \$20.00 each
Printshop Disk #3 for \$15.00

Anyone wishing to buy an Atari 130XE complete system with 2 drives, Archiver, Happy, Color Monitor, Interface, Keypad and many extras, plus disks and programs \$625.00

Call Vinnie Indovina 594-9731

TREASURER'S REPORT

By Reid Hoadley, ACORN Treasurer

OPERATING FUND

MONTH ENDING: OCTOBER 31 1987

INCOME EXPENSE RUNNING COMMENTS
TOTAL

*****		\$ 2090.75	BEGINNING BALANCE
\$34.00		\$ 2124.75	CURRENT NOTES PMTS
\$40.00		\$ 2164.75	NEWSLETTER ADS
\$79.00		\$ 2243.75	8 BIT DISK COPIES
\$13.50		\$ 2257.25	MEMBERSHIP DUES
\$12.50		\$ 2269.75	CONTRIBUTIONS
	\$257.81	\$ 2011.94	NEWSLETTER PRINTING
	\$102.00	\$ 1909.94	CURRENT NOTES SUBSCR

\$179.00	\$359.81	\$ 1909.94	

TOTAL		\$ 1909.94	
CASH ON HAND		\$ 21.50	
CHECKS ON HAND		\$ 0.00	
ST LIBRARY		\$ 46.93	
CHECKBOOK BAL.		\$ 2019.57	
EQUIPMENT FUND		\$ 500.00	

TIME TO RENEW

It is now time to renew membership in ACORN for 1988. Your 1987 membership expires in January and if you do not renew you will not receive the ACORN Kernel.

Please fill out the membership renewal form on the back cover of this Kernel and either:

1. Mail it and a check of \$18 to our Post Office Box

or

2. Place the renewal form and check or exact amount of cash (\$18) in an envelope give it to the Treasurer, Reid Hoadley at the November meeting.

INTERVIEW WITH KEITH LEDBETTER ABOUT THE NEW EXPRESS! BBS PROFESSIONAL

Uploaded to Atari Apex BBS by Chuck Leazott, HDUG

Network: Atari and the Hard Disk User Group have recently had the distinct pleasure of interviewing Keith Ledbetter, author of the highly successful *Express!* series of Terminal and BBS Programs. This interview centers on the newest of his BBS programs - *BBS Express! Professional*.

Chuck: Welcome Keith. We are honored to have this opportunity to talk with you about your current efforts.

Keith: Thank you Chuck. It's nice to have support like yours.

Chuck: Believe me Keith, there are hundreds more that support your work. I'm not alone. Well, I have a pretty exhaustive list of questions about your newest version of *BBS Express!*, and I'm sure the readers will be glad to hear about it.

Let me start out by asking one of the most frequently asked questions I get here. Will you allow other SysOps and programmers the opportunity to write their own files as utilities, games and other things for this version?

Keith: Absolutely. This new version is dramatically different than all the others. I'll supply a list of equates for those wishing to write utilities for the BBS. There will be some example programs, and source code for many of the 'external' commands will be on the distribution disk.

All the variable addresses and system vectors that point to commonly used routines will be supplied so that the bulk of work you have to do to write programs is already done (getting input from the user, displaying strings to the screen/modem, etc). You don't have to write all of that stuff yourself, just use the routines already provided.

Chuck: Which language did you use to write the new version?

Keith: Well, this version is 100% Machine Language (ML). I'm writing in on my ST (using a 6502 cross-assembler), and then porting it over to the 8-bit.

Chuck: Then which language do the programmers use to add these other options?

Keith: MAC/65 or any other assembler. The routines and equate files will be supplied in MAC/65 format, so if you want to use another assembler there will have to be some typing-in done.

Chuck: What are some of the new things we can expect...Changes in format, etc.?

Keith: Well, first of all, the biggie is that this version REQUIRES SpartaDOS 3.2x. Also, you are really going to need a ramdisk or a hard disk to run this version. Most of the commands are external [separate files], and using a floppy will be slow, to say the least. It can be done, but I don't think SysOp's would be satisfied with it. You might be able to get by with a US Doubled 1050, but you're still talking about accessing the disk drive for every command.

You get to basically use the commands supplied, and if you don't like those, you can write your own. It should be a simple task for those SysOps who write in assembler (or, who knows someone who does).

Chuck: Whew! Let's jump ahead for a second, and let me ask when this gem will be up for sale.

Keith: Oh, that's really hard to say. Right now I'd say...

Chuck: ...Before this newsletter hits the stands in October???

Keith: No, right now, I'd say it's about 80% complete. I'm hoping to get into Beta test by the end of this month [August], and it might be possible by October, but it's really hard to say. I'll let Network: Atari and the Mouse BBS do the Beta testing.

Chuck: Music to my ears....

Keith: I figured it would be.

Chuck: OK, back to configuration. I had one of my users ask if you were going to support Kermit Protocol.

Keith: No, we'll support XMODEM, CRC and YMODEM, but not Kermit.

Chuck: You mentioned SpartaDOS 3.2x, and I was wondering which other DOS's can be used.

Keith: The new system absolutely requires SpartaDOS 3.2d. No other DOS. You can use the R-TIME8 or run off of the internal software clock in SpartaDOS.

Chuck: What about the *Sparta-X Cartridge*?

Keith: It's being worked on right now. It should work with that because we are going to try to preserve all of the system vectors, all the time/date vectors and all of that.

Chuck: Are there any foreseeable problems running off of an MIO or P: R: *Connection*?

Keith: No, I'm running it off of an MIO right now. Should be no problems at all.

Chuck: Ok, how many columns support are we to expect? 38? 40? 80?

Keith: The BBS totally supports both 40 and 80 columns, as well as both ATASCII and ASCII menu files. There are basically 4 sets of menus under the HELP40 and HELP80 Pathnames. Under those paths, there are also .ATA files for ATASCII callers, and .ASC files for ASCII callers. I'm still debating on whether to support VT52 color stuff for ST users.

Chuck: What about the high baud rate? What's the limit this time?

Keith: 300 through 9600 Baud.

Chuck: Will it actually do 9600?

Keith: Yes, but you have to have the exact same type of modem on each end to have it work. There's not much call for it, but it's there.

Chuck: I figure there's only 2 other folks out there in modem land pushing 9600 baud, so I'm sure we don't really need it. I'm not going to go out to buy 9600 unless it becomes standard

Keith: Right, but it's in there for those that want it.

Chuck: Basically 2400 baud max will be used. Great.

Keith: Right.

Chuck: Ok, What else?

Keith: Well, before, I let the SysOp define his/her own pathnames and such, but this version has them all hard-coded.

You have to Create sub-directories [CREDIR] each of those since they are hard-coded. Some of the sample directory names are like COMMANDS>, HELP40>, HELP80>, BASES>, USERLOG>, FILES_01>, etc. The message bases have a limit of 250 messages per base, with 4000 bytes per message. That's plenty to go around I guess. That's roughly 50 lines @ 80 Columns P/Line. A short novel.

Chuck: That should make everyone happy. Is there a good Message Base Processor?

Keith: Absolutely, but it's set up a bit differently than the older *BBS Express*'s. Previously, we had all of the 'controlling' commands at the command-prompt level, whereas now they are at the 'after reading a message'

level. I found it was easier (and much more powerful) that way.

Chuck: How about the Menu's? Will they be set up the same? Can I use my old menu's from the old system?

Keith: No, because they are set-up a little differently. However, I may write a quick converter program to change all those over. Maybe even one for the userlog.

Chuck: Are the "letter-commands" still going to be the same?

Keith: Sure, if the SysOp wants them to be. The SysOp has the ability to add commands, change letters to existing commands, or totally remove commands as he/she wishes. It's possible that there may be 'word' command support, too, but it's a little too early in the game to say for sure. I prefer them, but my surveys of BBS users show that they OVERWHELMINGLY prefer the one-key commands.

Chuck: Ok. What did I forget?

Keith: You have to ask me about download files!!!

Chuck: Hehe..ok, hey Keith, what have you done about the 8 Pathname limit in the download section?

Keith: Well, I'm glad you asked me about that. There are now 516,128 available filenames that you can have in your Massive download section!

It's set up like this: The program searches for up to 32 sub-directories (FILES_01> through FILES_32>). Under each of those sub-directories are all the sub-directories that you want scanned. If you figure 127 SysOp-Chosen Sub-directories under each of these FILES_xx> sub-directories, each containing 127 downloadable files, you come up with the big picture.

Another way to put it is you can have sub-directories FILES_01> through FILES_32>, each containing 127 sub-directories apiece, and each of those containing 127 files.

Chuck: Alright! You shouldn't have any more complaints about that!

Keith: Nope. I took care of that one for a while.

Chuck: That was probably your biggest complaint, true?

Keith: Yeah, that was the big one. The people that have switched to other BBS's switched because of that problem. Well, now we've made the whole BBS better, so I am hoping that we can get most of those folks to come back.

Chuck: I hate to admit it Keith, but I was one of those that switched. I'm so ashamed. But, now that we have a new toy, I'll gladly switch over again to see the changes you've made. I really have to say that personally I don't care which BBS I operate, but it has to suit the system I run. With 120+ MEG to play with, I need flexibility.

Keith: Well, you had to do what you had to do.

Chuck: Sigh.

Keith: Getting back to the Downloads. Each file on the system will have a 240 character description allotted to it, just like the *ST Express*! BBS.

Chuck: That also takes up disk space. I can see why you need a large system.

Keith: Yes, I figure everyone will go with double density, and that's why I went with 240. Each will only take up 2 sectors on the disk P/Description. But, that is at the SysOps' approval. If you don't want to use the descriptions, you can set that up in the SYSDATA.DAT file.

Chuck: Does it have a catalog command like the ST version?

Keith: Better than the ST version. It will allow a catalog of the files you specify with wildcards. There will be 15 names P/Page and each one downloadable with the press of a single key.

Chuck: That sounds like it's going to take some dedicated

effort by a SysOp to set it up. But once it is done, you can have a class act.

Keith: Sure. And all the file descriptions are editable from the SysOp, but really all you'll have to do to set it up is just to copy all your files over and then go through and do a rowse. It will tell you "Description not available", and you just hit <E>dit to write up a short description. It's only a lot of work if you have a lot of files, like you.

Chuck: I'm having typer's cramps already. However, it costs to be the boss, so I can't complain.

On to another subject. How about the logon data? Will that still be set up the same? Selectable to go either to the printer or a disk file?

Keith: Yes, it's the same as the older versions. You'll be able to use handles and such, and the initial logon sequence asks quite a lot of questions, so if it goes to a disk file, it will take up a bit of space. You have plenty. The rest is similar to the other versions.

Chuck: Does that include download ratios?

Keith: Yes. Each user has individual download ratios in their user record.

Chuck: What are you going to charge for this?

Keith: I'm not real sure yet. It won't be much though.

Chuck: Ok, what's the maximum number of active users we can have?

Keith: Well, over 65,000 users, but realistically you have a logical limit. See, SpartaDOS can handle a single file 8 Megabytes in length. Take that number of bytes, and divide it by 256 [the number of bytes each userlog takes up], and you come out with around 30,000 or so.

Chuck: Well, I don't think that anyone will have that many users. Even Atari Base would find it tough.

Keith: Right, and that would be almost a whole Hard Drive partition just for the userlog.

Chuck: Time to buy a mainframe!

Keith: Yeah, no kidding.

Chuck: What about Passwords?

Keith: On this new version, the passwords are user supplied.

Chuck: Great. How many characters?

Keith: From 1 to 15 characters, I believe. Again though, just like the ST version...the user will be assigned a record number, and if they logon with that number then the look-up time will be almost immediate.

Now, they can optionally key in their Handle along with their password and then the board will search for it much like it does when you send E-Mail to somebody. It looks to see that they exist. So, there are multiple ways to logon.

Chuck: Ok, would you please explain again, if you will, the equate functions that you're supplying with the disk?

Keith: Sure. Really there's 2 sets of equates. One is the MAC/65 source code equates to all of the "Global Variables", including the SYSDATA data, the USER record data, current date, current time and so forth. Then there are also a set of vectors that are jump vectors. These are calls to routines that are in the 'shell' (the memory-resident portion) of the BBS itself. Makes it much easier to write external commands.

[ZNOTE: An indepth description was given concerning these equates, but this will come on the disk, so we won't waste the space here going into detail.]

Chuck: Then any Atari assembler will be functional for these mods.

Keith: Correct. Yes. It's all very simple, because most of the routines you need are already in the shell of the program. You don't have to come up with routines to

handle user input, etc. They are already there.

Even when you're talking about really indepth utilities or games like adventures and such, those things are readily accessible.

Chuck: Then, are we limited to the size of these external commands?

Keith: Yes. Somewhere around 16K is the limit. That's even bigger than SpartaDOS itself, so those are really involved. The shell really takes all the kluge work out of writing an assembler program. It's totally possible to write a game like *Zork*_(tm) for on-line use if that's what you wanted to do.

Chuck: Where can the folks purchase the program?

Keith: This will be through *Orion Micro Systems* as always. The main support/sales board will remain there.

Chuck: Can the *Hard Disk User Group* members get a special price on it?

Keith: I'm sure we can work something out for your members. Those are probably the people most likely to purchase it. Sure.

Chuck: Ok, I'll send Chris King, at *Orion*, a list of my members and their membership numbers.

Keith: That'll do it.

Chuck: Next question. How many security levels are allowed on the new system?

Keith: About 320. See, there are 32 Msg Bases, 32 File areas [SIGS] and 32 command levels. So basically, each user record has 32 flags for each of those things. Then there are other things that you would need to read the documentation to see.

Chuck: Is there an option on the new board to allow survey's?

Keith: Yes. Up to 32 trackable surveys with an unlimited number of questions.

Chuck: Unlimited?

Keith: Well, by disk space only.

Chuck: Superior!

Keith: Again, we're talking about a BBS designed for a really big system. So, by now you can probably see that this is really for a Hard Disk or Ramdisk configuration.

Chuck: I was seriously hoping for these kinds of modifications, and truthfully, there are a lot of folks going to hard disk systems. Therefore this is quite a marketable product in that sense.

Keith: Right. You can still run it from floppy, but you'll be severely limited in the options allowed unless you have a ramdisk.

Chuck: I see. Those folks running Megabytes, and larger RAMdisks will be able to apply most of the available options.

Keith: Correct.

Chuck: Ok, here's one. I know this is an important issue. Are the folks that have purchased the other *Express!* programs going to be able to trade in their old versions for the new one?

Keith: Yes they can. Trading in the master disk for a replacement. Even though this version is being called *BBS Express! Professional* [*Express! PRO*], it is a version 2.0 upgrade of the 850 version. So, those that are currently owners will be able to upgrade it for a fee that has not been set yet.

There is also going to be a 1030 version of *BBS Express! PRO*, so that news should make some people happy. This will be released sometime after the 850 version.

Originally, we were not going to write a 1030 version. We figured, hey, everyone is stepping up to 1200 baud

these days. But, we thought about it, did some checking, and found that there are still quite a few 1030 owners out there. And, since those are the people who supported us from day one (the 1030 was the first version to come out), we are going to support them fully.

Chuck: I'm not sure how many folks run 1030's and Hard Drives, but it's there if needed.

Keith: Right. It has gotten to the point now, where we're going to have to talk to the folks a little more to determine what kind of system they want. We have to be sure they get the version that they can use best. With so many versions out, it may confuse a few.

Chuck: To be sure they don't get a Hard Disk version to run off a single drive...etc.

Keith: Right.

Chuck: Hey! Do you know what just happened?

Keith: What's that.

Chuck: I just ran out of questions!

Keith: Ha!!

Chuck: Well, I sure do appreciate all this good information, and I'm sure my readers do too.

So, now's your chance to ramble, and tell the folks what I've neglected to ask.

Keith: Well, the most important thing to get across is that this is really a large system BBS program, and it really does act that way.

There's 5 different logon sequences that the SysOp can use. There are a LOT of external commands available for the SysOp. See, this version is different, in that it was written more for the SysOps editability, and still allows more things for the users. It's simply a better all-around program than the earlier versions (of course, when you write in assembler you can do a lot more things, too).

The nice part about it is the fact that it's what the SysOp wants (I hope!).

A lot of the program isn't even written yet, and I'm not really sure which way I want to go on some of the things. Sorta flying by the seat of my pants. That's why I needed some suggestions from your users. I've basically added all the features that everyone has asked for over the past year or so.

Chuck: Well...ending an interview, especially this one, is a hard thing to do, but I suppose we have to do it.

LOOK

MEETING DATE CHANGES

The ACORN General Meeting is on
November 18, 1987

The ACORN Executive Meeting is on
November 11, 1987

Keith: Ok, well, let's do this... give me a call in a few minutes. I'll boot up the new version, and let you take a look at what I've got completed. This way you can get a general idea of the new system.

Chuck: I'm shakin' all over! Ok, and I want to thank you VERY much for this exclusive interview today!

Keith: My pleasure. No problem.

Chuck: Fantastic. Take care Keith.

Keith: See you later.

[**ZNOTE:** I called Keith and saw the new version at work. I want one! I figure, with all the changes that he has made, it will be worth whatever he asks for it. And, the option to trade in your old master for the new version is a great deal!

Plan to call *Network: Atari HD Express! BBS <ZBBS>* in the next few weeks to see this version at work! I will guarantee you will be impressed with his efforts, and continue to support him in his endeavors.

And last, but certainly not least, Keith... You've done it again!

Tired of Paying High Online Charges and Sign-Up Fees?

COMPUTALK TCS™ The BBS for your Atari™

- Network of 6 Atari computers linked together.
- Compu-Gab, CB Simulation with both Public and Private areas.
- Compu-Trek, one of 5 Multi-User Online Adventures.
- Over 2,000 downloads for both the 8-bit and ST Computers.
- Accessible through PC Pursuit.
- Online Conferences, Message Bases, E-Mail, Atari News, and more!!

★ ONLY \$25.00 for 6 Months ★
No Sign-Up Fees / No Online Charges

Call today and sign-up online for a trial account.
(817) 589-2588 (Direct Access)
(214) 589-2588 (using PC Pursuit)

MasterCard

COMPUTALK TCS

P.O. BOX 18346 / Fort Worth, Texas 76118

VISA

NEOCHROME ANIMATION

By David Lindsley

Courtesy of NYBBLES & BYTES, September 1987

If you have *Neochrome* version 0.9 or 1.0, you may be surprised to know that animation is available within the program. Not just color cycling, but actual page flipping of up to 99 pictures. I got this tidbit from the July 1987 issue of *FOCUS* newsletter by John Hileman.

To access animation, click on the GRABBER icon. Then go to the word "GRABBER" that appears to the right and put the point of the arrow in the top left hole of the last "R". Press the right mouse button. Now a new icon that looks like a movie camera will appear in the left group of icons. Amazed? You ain't seen nothing yet. Go to the drawing screen and create a small object to animate. Click on the movie camera and go to your object. Click and hold the left mouse button to put a rectangle around it (allow lots of room, since this will be where you will animate). Now move the cursor to the right box and click on ADD. Go back to the object and click and HOLD the right mouse button (Grabber will appear). Use the Grabber to move the object slightly. You can use the X and Y coordinates shown at the bottom of the animation menu to guide you if you wish. Then go back to ADD and repeat as often as you like. Each ADD will result in another animation frame.

Finally, with the right mouse button, click on one of the arrows in the right box to begin animation (just like clicking on the *Neochrome* ramp lines). Left mouse button clicks will speed it up, while right clicks will slow it down. Clicking on the opposite arrow with the right mouse button will stop the animation. Be careful not to speed up the animation too fast as you will lose the arrow cursor.

You can have color cycling and animation going at the same time for a really great effect. I drew a little rocket and had streams of fire coming out the rear which I color cycled with three shades of orange. Then I moved the whole thing with the animation feature.

Clicking on the small COPY BOX icon in the lower center of the animate menu will place the current animation frame into the cut buffer.

Unfortunately, you MUST have the workscreen covering up the bottom half of your picture in order for the animation to run. There is no way to see the entire picture AND run animation at the same time. Apparently this bug is what has kept this feature "secret" and undocumented.

Notice that the animation feature allows you to save and load in completed animation sequences. The filename has an "ANI" extension instead of "NEO". If you have the famous public domain *Neochrome* parrot animation that flies across the screen, guess what? You can load in that parrot and animate it in *Neochrome*! There are twenty separate pictures that make up the flying motion.

I was able to get the SLIDEANI.PRГ that animates the parrot to animate a new sequence that I created, by renaming my animation to "BIRD2.ANI" and replacing the one on the disk. If you do this, don't throw away the original "BIRD2.ANI", rename it to something like "BIRD2.ANX". Obviously, this is a klutzy way of getting your animation into a slide show, and you may not want your animated pictures to fly across the screen as the

parrot does. So there isn't any read good way to view your picture in a slide show program. If the guy who wrote that SLIDEANI.PRГ would make his source code available then maybe I could remove the moving sequence and give the user the option of a file selector box to start the animation sequence.

If you don't dabble very often in *Neochrome* you may be interested to know of other unique features that neither *DEGAS* nor *DEGAS ELITE* offer.

The Jackknife icon allows you to cut around irregular shapes (rather than a whole rectangle) to copy into the cut buffer. When moving an object, you have the option of moving it BEHIND the rest of the picture rather than on top. Also unique are on-screen X-Y coordinates, color fill while in magnify mode, and automatic centering of text.

I personally feel that selecting a color from the palette is much easier than with *DEGAS ELITE*'s confusing color palette. And, I like the way circles, rectangles, and lines are drawn "real-time" as opposed to the ghost outlines method of *DEGAS*.

I admit, though, that I was rather disappointed that version 1.0 as the official "final" release is not actually finished. There is still one blank space left in the icon menu. The animation feature is of course unfinished. And when are they ever going to make the fill patterns that are already built into GEM available? Also, there are 92 kilobytes set aside as "reserved" in every *Neochrome* picture file. This is a lot of extra padding for SOMETHING. Lastly, the most limiting factor is that it only works in low resolution.

PIRATES OF THE BARBARY COAST

An 8-bit Game Review

by Penny Ormston,

From Starsoft Development Labs

Courtesy of PSAN, September 1987

I had seen *Pirates of the Barbary Coast* advertised heavily for the ST, and was very happy that such an interesting looking game was going to be released for us 8-biters as well. What sits before me is a Beta copy, and to my knowledge this program has not been released yet. I do not know what the retail price will be, which is unfortunate as this would probably influence my review.

Pirates of the Barbary Coast has nice graphics. There are pull down menus making all player activity much simpler than using the keyboard. You only have to flip the disk once and that is right after loading, which is nice. In general, the program is very friendly and easy to use.

The scenario in the game is as follows: You are the captain of a ship. An evil pirate named Bloodthroat has kidnapped your daughter and is asking for a ransom of \$50,000. You must make enough money to pay the ransom through buying and selling goods, finding buried treasure or fighting pirate ships. Then you meet with Bloodthroat

and either give him the money, or fight him. The choice is up to you. Oh, and one more thing. You have 30 days to accomplish all of this.

Making enough money to pay the ransom is fairly easy. You travel from one port to another buying goods at a low price and selling them at a high price. Prices can be very random. If you found that RUM was selling well in Tangiers the last time you were there, and you go there again hoping to cash in on the RUM you bought in Tripoli, you might find that it is now rock bottom and be stuck with it for a while. Your ship can only hold just so much, so you have to use a little common sense along the way.

Fighting pirate ships can be a hazardous task! Loading the cannons is a long and arduous task, and your aim must be good as well! Practice can only help! You always have the option of FLEEING the scene of battle, so you do not have to stick it out until you're sunk. If however, you are fortunate enough to sink the enemy ship, you will have your choice of taking the ship's log (with useful hints) or the booty. I think it is better to take the booty. You will need the extra cash for a high score, and your ship will doubtless need repairs as well.

After fighting, whether you win a battle or have fled the scene, you will usually have a damaged ship, and some casualties. You can take your ship in for repairs, and purchase more men, food or weapons at any of the city ports. Prices for all of these things vary from place to place, and game to game.

If you stay away from pirate ships, then you will find that winning the game is easy. Too easy if you ask me. I wish there were some sort of level selection to make it more difficult. The program does keep track of high scores, and something worth working toward. There are random elements in the game, and that is a big plus. If it weren't for that, the game would be boring by the second time you played it.

All in all, I like the game. I only think it is too simple. I don't know if I would recommend buying it -- that depends entirely on the price! If the price were reasonable, I would definitely buy it. If the price were a little high, then no way! I don't think I would be able to get my money's worth.

MRZ INTERVIEWED

CONDUCTED BY RON KOVACS OF ZMAGAZINE

Uploaded to Atari Apex by Chuck Leazott, HDUG

RON: Good day Sir, Please tell our readers about the HDUG, and why you started this User Group?

MRZ: Ok, (deep breath). HDUG (Hard Disk User Group) is designed around sysops that have the yearning to operate a hard drive with the atari computers.

It's really for everyone wishing to run a HD, but are afraid to start due to a lack of knowledge.

We started the group as a result of a conversation with Tom Harker at ICD. Since they are now supporting HD's, we needed a place to coordinate all the hd activity. Thus, HDUG was born. I have to give credit where credit is due, and it was really Tom's idea. Since he didn't really have

the time, I took it upon myself to gopher it.

RON: Were you running a BBS system before HDUG existed?

MRZ: Yes, I had a simple system (started with Amis, of all things).

After talking to Tom, I bought a HD.

I've been into BBS'n since 1982, and started with a single 1050 (and "no" ramdisk). Using Atari DOS 3.0 didn't really tickle me.

RON: I know what you mean!!! What would a perspective HD user get out of joining this user group?

MRZ: Well, it depends on a lot of things. The newsletter idea is a device setup to spread news on HD systems, and the how's, where's, and even why's of using a hard drive rather than a floppy/ramdisk combination.

You have to realize that in the first place, you have to have \$\$\$ to get the hd, but it doesn't hurt for too long.

RON: Sounds interesting. How about some information for membership instructions.

MRZ: Sure... we chose a very low cost for membership. It takes quite a bit of time to get the data together for the newsletter (you know all about that part), and printing costs are no picnic. So, \$18 for a 1 year subscription to the nl sounded reasonable. the nl is currently a quarterly, and seems to be getting off on the right track.

Folks can join HDUG by writing to:

NETWORK: HDUG
5831 SUN BAY
SAN ANTONIO, TX 78244

We ask that you please include any data that you wish to have inserted in the newsletter. Things like local bbs's and user groups. Also, if you have a hard drive setup, we would really like to know what components it consists of.

RON: Talking about componets, do you include both 8-bit and 16-bit in your group?

MRZ: Yes. If you support Atari, we support you. Anything and everything that atari equipment can handle in the hard disk industry we want to know about. All inputs come from the members of the group. If you don't tell us, we don't know.....yet.

RON: What other offers are available to members?

MRZ: Oh, there are many discounts on products from lots of folks. Once we establish "relationships" with companies, we usually can get some form of discount on hardware and software for the HD Systems. For example, there are 2 new "backup" utilities designed to help the hard core users backup their systems to floppy and HD.

Flashback! and *Hardback* (from ICD and Orion Micro Systems, respectively) are offered to members with at a substantial discount. Also, hardware is offered at a discount.

RON: I have received and read a few messages on the Zmag BBS about users looking for hard disk information and hard disk repair. Does your group assist with helping members or offering members repair information or a service?

MRZ: Well, you have to understand that the *Hard Disk User Group* is unique in the respect that it's totally a "mail-order" user group.

Any correspondence is on modems and BBS's that help support us...like your system. So, when a member has problems or questions, we can lead them to the right place (and cheapest) to get the problem solved.

Some things we can handle in the message bases but others, of course, have to be referred.

RON: What companies would you suggest (Hard Disks) for new hard disk buyers?

MRZ: Hmm...That's touchy, since I deal with a lot of different places and don't like playing favorites (even though I have some). But, let's see...*ICD* is one company that will research problems with systems they sell, and other systems that you have. *Lurie and Associates* handle their new "BTL" HD systems, and of course there's always *Seagate, INC.*, which really knows the in's and out's of the "theory" behind HD systems.

RON: Sounds like a lot of work for a new hard disk buyer. I suppose you would suggest an MIO to your future HD buyers, are there any other interfaces available to Atari users?

MRZ: Well, again...I have my favorites, but there are numerous systems to use. *Supra* has an interface designed for both Atari 8/16 bit systems. The BTL is useful, and is quite similar to *ICD'S MIO* interface. Since I have an MIO, I have to say that it's perfect for my needs.

I'm not sure what the drive spec capacity is on the other companies' interfaces, but using *spartaDOS* and the MIO will allow a person to run a whopping 128 megabytes on a \$59.95 8-BIT Atari computer without a bit of trouble. I run 120 megs.

RON: Before we terminate this interview, what features are available on the *Network Atari BBS* and what are the future plans for *HDUG*?

MRZ: Well, we're in the middle of a conflict here at *Network*... We have to make everyone happy, which is our business, but trying to find the best bbs program to let us use all 120 megs on-line is a chore. Currently, like yourself, we run the *OASIS BBS* (sorry Keith and everyone else).

This allows us to have all our d/l's on-line at once. Keith Ledbetter will soon be releasing a new version of the *850 EXPRESS! BBS*, and we are slated to do the beta testing shortly. As a matter of fact, I'll be doing an indepth interview with Keith this coming Saturday about this new system.

We'll know more at that time. Not to drag on, but I like to be sure that everyone knows that I support "any" bbs that supports Atari. In the next issue of the *HDUG* newsletter we'll have a complete review of most of the popular bbs's, and pit them together. You decide which system suits you best.

RON: (Last question)

Do you have information about *ICD* news for the months ahead, and expectations on the user group?

MRZ: Well, I can say that after speaking with the crew at *ICD*, they expect to release all the new products in a mad rush. I've been told that it will be before Christmas, but don't take that wrong. I asked Tom if they were waiting for the Xmas rush, and he sorta chuckled and said absolutely not. One of the slated products, *SpartaDOS 4 Elite*, has been cancelled, but they will take all those files and probably include them into the "tools" disk.

This sounds terrific, and I've seen some of those tools in action at the *ICD* office. We can expect to be treated with an armload of things that we've all been patiently waiting for.

As for the *Hard Disk User Group*, I'm working on some "tools" myself, and have enlisted the programming efforts of one of the "sleepers" programmers in the 8-bit community. **Don Peasley** is his name, and you can all rest assured that you'll be hearing many exciting things from him.

RON: Ok... Please give us your *Network: Atari BBS* number and address again for those who probably read on past it.

MRZ: Sure..

NETWORK: ATARI

5831 SUN BAY

SAN ANTONIO, TX. 78244

Voice: 512-662-9764

Modem: 512-662-9765 (any time/ baud)

NOTE: To all your readers... Please don't call my voice number at 3am thinking it's the BBS. Heh.

RON: Ok Chuck, I want to thank you for this interview. I hope we have covered a few of the important aspects and will be calling on you after the release of your next newsletter.

MRZ: Well thanx a meg, and I'd like to ramble to yer readers for just a sec. Do you mind?

RON: Not at all!!!!

MRZ: Ok, let's me say that starting a hard disk system for the Atari systems, or any systems, can be a trying thing. It's not something that is done easily, but once you get into it it's really phun! Don't be influenced by others that have had "trouble" with their systems. Get the facts.

Do it smart. Get all the details "before" you buy your products. Because, once you've invested "megga" bucks in your system, you are stuck with it. Look around. Shop. See what all the ruckus is about. Don't be hasty in the products you purchase. Find a dependable company that will really "support" your hard earned money.

Lastly, call me... I'll fix you up with all the information you need to have.

Thanks for the time, and a tip of the hat to anyone the buys Atari!!

RON: Chuck, Thanks again. Good luck with the group.

MRZ: Thank you Ron, hope all the *HDUG* efforts don't crash!! Chow.

FLOPPY DISK RESURRECTION FOR 5 1/4 DISKS

By "Rootbeers"

Courtesy of HACKS, June 1987

Well, sooner or later it's bound to happen. A disk of yours sits in the sunlight or a drink spills on it. What do you do? Well, this happened to me recently; a cup of tea spilled and destroyed my most recent work disk. Even so, in ten minutes' time I had the data safely back.

Here's what you do. Take the disk to a sink along with a dustless but soft cloth and a felt tip marker (preferably waterproof). Wash your hands. Mark the top of the disk itself near the hub. Tear open the welds in the side farthest from the opening for the head, but be careful not to bend or scratch the disk. **DO NOT USE A KNIFE UNLESS YOU KNOW THAT IT IS NOT MAGNETIZED!** On the disk I had, the welds could be easily torn, perhaps a new razor blade would be the next safest thing to use. In the following steps, handle the disk by the edges and center only; if the area is polished don't touch it. Remove the disk itself from the sleeve and rinse it thoroughly under the tap. The water will easily run off the polished surface of the disk but will wet the unpolished areas. Use the cloth to dry the disk GENTLY; only the center and edges should be wet anyway. Allow the disk to air dry for a few minutes. Carefully insert the disk itself into the disk drive (without the sleeve) making sure the proper side is

up. When you close the door of the disk drive, do so gently and be sure the disk is properly centered. Try to read the disk (do a directory of it, for instance). You should be able to read the disk at this point. Back it up IMMEDIATELY.

SO YOU THINK ATARI HAS TROUBLES ?????

By Jim Woodward

Courtesy of THE POKEY PRESS, September 1987

You think that there is trouble in Sunnyvale? Think that if Jack and Sons don't get those new products out, there won't be any reason for me to keep writing this column? Well, guess again kids. It's time to get hard core and jump back into the real world.

First of all, the following information is taken from the July 27, 1987 issue of *MacWEEK*, a magazine that covers what computer? And when does it come out? Very good! We can go on now.

First off imagine that you are **John Sculley**, President of *Apple* computer. You are sitting at your desk, looking at stock reports, profit margins, product release schedules, all those tough things that you do as President of *Apple Computers*. It has been a tough day, the usual complaints, projects that are way over-budget and past due date. You have Excedrin Headache #276. So, you hop into your fancy car, open the sunroof, and head for home and the hot tub and a nice cold drink.

Sounds like the average executive day so far, right? Wrong. You, as the Big Cheese, want to have some relaxing music after that hellish day. So, you turn on the car stereo, and switch to your favorite local station. Ahhhhh, that feels much better. Things are finally going right today....or so you think. Because around the bend, and past the next exit, is something worse than any nut firing at your car....yes, it is..... The Super Excedrin Headache. That Powerful locomotive that Superman is more powerful than is now running full speed inside your head. And that speeding bullet is now ricocheting in there too. And hat tall building....it just collapsed.

What happened? Well, the newscaster comes on and is giving you the latest business news. And it isn't good news. You hear the news and turn off at the first exit, and head back towards the office. This looks like it is gonna be a long night.

NO WRIST SLAP HERE.....

By now, you are wondering what I am talking about, and so am I. Let's get to the point and remember, you are still John Sculley. The radio broadcast told you of how *Toshiba* was in hot water with the U.S. Government for selling the Russians computer equipment. Equipment that would, when used with the milling equipment sold to the Russians by a Norwegian company, would allow the Russians to make silent submarine propellers. And every school aged child must know that selling anything more powerful than the old Atari 2600 that is collecting dust in the closet to the Soviet Union is enough to get those men in dark suits from Washington D.C. knocking at your door. What does *Apple* have to do with *Toshiba*? Plenty! It seems that *Toshiba* makes major portions of the *Apple Image*

Writer II. And is geared up to make the major parts of the soon to be announced *Image Writer LQ* 24-pin printer. *Apple* stands to lose over \$150 million a year, just on the *Image Writer II* market. What they would lose on the LQ model is unknown. But remember, you are the President of *Apple*, how does it feel to get kicked in the teeth?

The U.S. Congress is talking about banning *Toshiba* products from being sold in this country. Even if it means that jobs will (be) lost. Even if it means that firms like *Apple* will lose money. It doesn't matter, we have to teach those guys at *Toshiba* a lesson.

Then, as if *Apple* doesn't have enough problems, *Panasonic* and *Brother* say that they will be more than happy to meet their needs. Just one problem. *Apple* says that it will take at least two years to get another company up to speed producing a printer to meet their specifications. Real cute.

Oh well, them's the breads, right? Wrong! This incident shows why a whole lot of companies, from those who make computers to cars, to whatever, are in a very sticky situation. Say you are making the amazing new "Byte-Buster" personal computer. You have a company that you buy your disk drives from, another that supplies your chips, another that makes your monitors, yet another that makes the cables to hook everything up, and yet another that makes the boxes that everything gets shipped in. If just one link in the supply chain gets cut off....no production. Your customers are buying the competing "Techno-tron". The stores that carry your products drop them. And you have a ton of half built computers.

It is the same way with the car companies. The engine is made in West Germany, the transmission comes from South Korea and the digital dashboard comes from Japan. Then, all those parts are shipped to Mexico or Brazil and the car is made. Don't laugh at this because that's just how several cars now being sold by the Big 4 auto makers are being built. Suppose that something bad happens to the governments of one of those countries and they aren't letting the parts out or the workers go on strike. Now what? You can't hand the customer a bunch of boxes and tell them to make it themselves.

And now, the rest of the story. The reason many of the new products that have been promised from *Atari* are not here is because of similar problems. This company has the needed chip back-ordered. That company had a fire and they can't make anything at all, and that means that another source has to be found, and then they have to be able to produce the part at a similar cost, meet your standards, and get them to you yesterday. Then, the printer hasn't finished the boxes, the documentation is in final revisions, the software is at the duplicators, etc.

MORAL OF THE STORY: All of us, myself included, are just going to have to be more patient. It isn't gonna kill us if the new whatever comes out in September or December. Besides, you aren't the one that has to get the letters and phone calls. Imagine what it must be on the other side.

That is all for this month. Be with us next month when Mr. World Economy will explain the Gross National Product.

8-BIT SIG

By Chris Reich

A hearty congratulations to ACORN's own **Jeffrey Summers**, winner in *Antic's Practical Program Contest*. Jeff's trip planner program for the eight-bit computers is one more piece of evidence that there is more to Atari computers than games. The program, and the other three winners, are published in the November '87 issue of *Antic*. Buy the magazine, buy the disk; let *Antic* know we support the publishing of practical programs and want to see more of it. Well done, Jeff!

The October EBSIG (Eight-Bit Special Interest Group) meeting was fast-paced and productive. **Allen Schroeder** is waiting for the bulk purchase of floppy disks to arrive so that he can distribute disks to those who ordered them. We are expecting them for the November meeting.

John XXXXX demonstrated a utility program that writes a part of another program. Specifically, you design a screen layout by typing text where you want it to be, then John's program will write the program lines needed to reproduce that screen from a BASIC program. John also demonstrated a quiz data base program which will quiz you on your own (or somebody else's) questions. John felt the bite of Murphy's Law during the demonstration, but I'm sure by now he has things worked out. Thank you, John.

Bill Hood demonstrated an update to his *Galaxian* clone program. This newer version uses a redefined character set for the video display. Bill has donated the program to the club library. Bill's dad, also named Bill, is to be congratulated for encouraging his son's interest in programming. I feel that we're going to see some dynamite programs from Bill in the future.

I gave a brief talk on the care and feeding of cartridges. We discussed how to differentiate 4K, 8K, and 16K cartridges. Some types of cartridges can give occasional trouble, and we showed how to correct the trouble by cleaning either the cartridge connector or the contacts of the ROM chips inside.

At a future meeting, we will be doing some testing of how delicate floppy disks are. We will start with some disks with information on them, do evil-wicked-mean 'nasty things to them and see just what it takes to destroy the data. For those of you who liked to kick over sand castles when you were a kid, this should be real fun! If all goes well, we'll do this at the November meeting. If you'd like to make a presentation any time, just let me know before we get started so that I can plan the evening.

When I travel overseas, I always try to see what is happening in the local Atari scene. Some places are surprisingly active; Kuwait, for example. My travels most recently took me to Abu Dhabi, one of the United Arab Emirates in the Middle East. There were lots of computer stores, but those that had any Atari stock left were not readily admitting it. One proprietor informed me that they are now selling only 'real' computers such as the IBMs and Apples. I noticed a ten-year old girl playing a Donkey-Kong clone on an IBM in the corner. I couldn't resist the temptation to give the proprietor a look of mild disgust as I walked out and told him, "Those IBMs are nothing but game machines"! That is one travel memory I

will cherish for a long time to come.

Garage sale season seems to be over now. I must confess my wife has made me an aficionado of back-yard flea markets. One thing strike me as strange about them; I have not ever seen any Atari equipment at one all year long. Now we all know there must be scores of them gathering closet dust. So why are folk's not 'recycling' them? My guess is that people understand the value of a computer in the home, but not the use of them. For this reason, I believe members of ACORN should be doing more to promote our club to these people. Please, if you know anyone who is not using their computer, get them to a meeting and introduce us to them.

Before I leave the topic of garage sales, I've found that old record racks, the kind we used to store 45-RPM records in, make great floppy disk racks. They are commonly available for about 25 cents, and hold from 40 to 80 floppy disks. An added benefit is that they are more visible and can be found with less 'flipping' through the stack. Another tip; if you have a number of cartridges, six of them fit neatly into a 3X5 file card box.

Well gang, after years of fighting the notion of Atari computers as game machines, our favorite (?) computer company has introduced the first new eight-bit product in some time. At first I almost resigned that even Atari Corporation thought little of them, until I realized that the new XE game machine may be provide a benefit to present eight-bit owners.

Look what comes in the package. It is as complete a game system as any other on the market. But there are two significant differences; the keyboard and the disk drive port. The implications are obvious. Recall the Commodore commercial that appeared a few Christmas's ago. The stout, bald headed man behind the desk interviews the youngster with the horn-rimmed glasses for a job. The Jack Trameil clone comments, "I see you've scored over two million points in space invaders". Youngster smiles. JT clone continues, "And five million points in Pac-Man". Youngster nods, beaming. JT clone leans forward on his desk, scowls and asks, "So, young man, what do you know about COMPUTERS?". Youngster slumps in his chair, frowning. The point is well made.

That the XL game machine is compatible with existing computers should be a major selling point for it. On the other hand, if Atari were to promote it as a computer, they would perpetuate the notion that Atari computers are just game machines. Remember they made that mistake several years ago by calling the 2600 a 'video computer system'. I can foresee a great deal of good coming to the eight-bit user community once the XL game system has been put into many homes. One local toy store is already stocking some of the old cartridge games that I have not seen available in this country for years. I can see PILOT and LOGO being re-introduced, for example. Atari already has these products developed, so it makes sense to reap benefits (sales) from them. Atari has suddenly seen fit to develop their own bank-select cartridges now that the new game system is a reality. These cartridge will work in our computers, folks. Can you imagine an entire *Infocom* (TM) text adventure on cartridge, with instantaneous responses?! This technically simple piece of hardware has been a long time coming. The largest of them will hold more program and data than a double-density disk. When it arrives, we'll have something that our Commodore and Apple owning friends will envy.

so how do we current eight-bit users fit into the picture? Talk up the XE game system, and bring people to the meetings after they've made their purchase (or even before). Make them aware of how much software they can get real, real cheap from the ACORN library. Show them how to make the machine do what THEY want it to do, by making changes to programs. Offer to make printouts for them until they can get a printer. In short, encourage the purchase and use of the Atari XE game system. All of us will benefit.

HOT LINE BEING FORMED

At the October General meeting Kathy Scoville asked that a Hot Line be formed. She asked for people to sign up with name, area of expertise phone number and time of day to call. The purpose of this list is for ACORN members to know who to go to for help in areas of computing in which they need help. This list is still being compiled at press time and will (hopefully) be printed in the next Kernel. If you want to add your name to the Hot Line list, please call Kathy Scoville, 334-5820.

ACORN BUDGET ANALYSIS

BY REID HOADLEY, TREASURER

ITEM	EST EXPENSE	EST. INCOME	SOURCE OF COMPUTATION
8 BIT LIBRARY	\$ 176.00		TWELVEE PAGES PRINTING 2 TIMES PER YEAR
ST LIBRARY PRINTING	0.00		INDEX AVAILABLE ON DISK ONLY
POSTAGE	410.00		220 CC 6MOS 260 CC 6 MOS*.125+\$50
8 BIT LIBRARY SUPPLIES	50.00		100 DISKS @ .50
ST LIBRARY SUPPLIES	87.50		50 DISKS @ \$1.75
ST DISK POSTAGE	21.00		\$.70 PER SOLD DISK FOR MAILING
MEMBERSHIP INCOME		\$2250.00	100 FULL YR + 50 HALF YEAR
8 BIT DISK COPY INCOME		440.00	\$40/MONTH*11MONTHS
ST LIBRARY INCOME		120.00	30 DISKS SOLD AT \$4 EACH
NEWSLETTER PRINTING	1267.20		240C/M*11P/C*.04/P*12
SUPPLIES AND PRIZES	150.00		LABEL STOCK, PRINTED CARDS, MISC
COMPUTER AND DISK REPAIR	113.30		ESTIMATE
ROOM RENT	720.00		TWO ROOMS @ 30 EA FOR 12 MONTHS
AUCTION INCOME		100.00	AUCTION ONLY SPECIAL STUFF NOT INCL
CORPORATE FILING FEE	50.00		
NEWSLETTER ADVERTISING		260.00	
DISK SWAP INCOME		200.00	
8 BIT LIBRARY INDEX LIST		50.00	300 DISKS AT \$1 EACH
MISCELLANEOUS	100.00		100 LISTS AT \$.50
LIABILITY INSURANCE	375.00		CHECK FEES,PHONE,ETC.
CONTRIBUTIONS		100.00	
TOTAL	\$3520.00	\$3520.00	
NET INCOME AFTER EXPENSES		0.00	



ADVANCED SALE CONCERT TICKETS

If you, friends and/or relatives plan to attend the Robert Collister Midi Magic Show on Dec. 5 please come to the ACORN General Meeting on November 18 with the number of tickets you require so ACORN can reserve those seats. Tickets are \$1.00 each and must be paid for at the November meeting. Also note that thses seats will be held until 7:40 p.m. the night of the concert. After that time they will be open on a first come, first serve basis.

THE ST SIG

By Tom Bellucco

The October ST SIG was limited to 45 minutes but was chock full of information and the showing off of 2 sound digitizers. Here's a quick review of what went on:

During Random Access (or Randa-monium as I like to call it), **Vinnie Arrigali** informed us of a new Atari replacement policy. It seems that you can return your out-of-warranty ST to Atari along with payment in exchange for a brand new ST. The cost of a new 520ST is around \$95, and the cost of a new 1040ST is around \$110. These are not confirmed prices. A special note - if your 520ST has a one-meg upgrade, remove it! The 520ST returned to you will NOT have 1 meg. Speaking of 520ST's, it was mentioned that the new 520STfm machines DO NOT include the extra sockets necessary to upgrade the computer to 1 meg. To install the upgrade, you must first install the sockets, then install RAMs into the sockets. Notes on *PC-Ditto*: When using floppy disks, they MUST be formatted as PC-compatible disks. There is a program in the public domain called IBMFRMT.TOS that will do this. However, you can use a standard Atari hard drive with *PC-Ditto*. It does NOT have to be formatted in any special way. It must, however, only be divided into 2 partitions. OSS has finally released *Personal Pascal* version 2.0. Within days after it was released, a file showed up on *GENie* claiming to fix 2.0 and create 2.01. It seems one of the library files on the 2.0 disk had some typos. The 2.01 update is a replacement of this library file. It was also mentioned that there is, or will be, an ST emulator for the Amiga. Now, I can see why someone would want to emulate a Mac or PC (massive software available), but why an ST emulator?!?

Following Random Access, two sound digitizers were demonstrated. *ST-Replay* from *MichTron*, and *Pro Sound Designer* from *Eidersoft*. These two digitizers are very similar. A major difference is that *ST-Replay* is in cartridge form, while *Pro Sound Designer* plugs into the ST's printer port. How are these digitizers similar? Both can use the SAME sound editing software. After the meeting, I chatted with **Gordon Monnier** of *MichTron*. I told him that I liked how the PSD's editor looked much nicer and easier to use. He told me that there was an earlier version of that editor that works with *ST-Replay*. I got a hold of it and tried it, and sure enough, it works. I don't have all the commands down as it did not come with documentation, but it basically works the same as the editor you saw at the meeting. The sounds you heard from *ST-Replay* were created by me, in an area where there is a lot of computer equipment, including 2 computers and 3 monitors. I'm sure the buzzing sound was just interference. When I play the sounds that were supplied with *ST-Replay*, they are as clear as the sounds played from PSD, which, incidentally, were supplied with it. Both create data files than can be rather large, depending on the frequency you use when recording. I'd love to find out what's inside these digitizers, to see if there really are some major differences. Maybe someone out with a technical background can give us more information.

Those were the highlights of October's meeting. For November, we'll of course have more Randa-monium. I'm also trying to line up a couple demos of software that should turn out to be very interesting. Speaking of that, I heard someone in the group picked up *Word Perfect*. I'm sure the group would like to hear if it really is worth the \$300 they are asking.

See you November 18th...



Tom Bellucco
"Your Software Connection"
(716) 458-8368



Atari ST Public Domain software

The **Apex Archives** consists of 35 DS disks full of PD software for the Atari ST computers as of 10/1/87. Each month the set increases by 2-3 DS disks.

You can join the **Apex Archives** by purchasing the entire set, or for \$10. Members of the archives receive monthly file update lists and can purchase disks of software for only \$2.50! Or, sign up for **Apex Express** and receive disks, not lists, every month!

For more info, contact:

The Atari Apex
c/o Tom Bellucco
52 Hamlin Street
Rochester, NY 14615-3112

ST Products

Marble Madness	\$30.00
Barbarian	\$31.00
PC Ditto	\$72.00
Fuji 20 pak disks	\$25.00
Bulk disks	\$11.00
Paperboy	\$39.00
Test Drive	\$call\$

November means Your Software Connection will be carrying ALL new ST software titles! Call to find out what's new and what's in stock.

LIBRARY REQUEST FORM AND
MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM

Name _____			City, State, Zip _____		
Address _____			Phone _____		
<u>8-BIT</u> Public Domain Disks - \$4.00 each Two sides of software) (Includes the disk) _____ Total Amt. _____			<u>ST</u> Single Sided - \$4.00 _____ Double Sided - \$5.50 _____ Disk of the Month Subscription - \$35.00/yr _____ Partial Subscription \$3.00/mo (4 month minimum) _____ ST Library Directory Listing - \$.50 _____ Total Amt. _____		
DISK NUMBERS			DISK NUMBERS		
Acorn Membership \$18 per year Renewal Membership _____ New Membership _____			Check the appropriate line and mail form to the address below		

Mail 8-Bit requests and make check payable to:
REID HOADLEY
 P.O. Box 23676
 Rochester, NY 14692

Mail Membership renewals and make check
payable to :
ACORN
P.O. Box 23676
Rochester, New York 14692

Mail ST requests and make check payable to:
ROGER E. SAFFORD
 15 Safford Ave.
 Perry, NY 14530

The ACORN Kernel
P.O. Box 23676
Rochester, New York 14692

THIRD CLASS MAIL



SAN LEANDRO
COMPUTER CLUB
P.O. BOX 1525
SAN LEANDRO, CA 94577-0152